

# Woman Bathing

*Marilyn Bushman-Carlton*

*And if a woman have an issue . . . [of blood], she shall be put apart seven days;  
and whosoever toucheth her shall be unclean. . . .*

Leviticus 15:19

She performs the persistent ritual of cleansing,  
the splashing of water  
upon her scarlet apple flesh  
sullied with blood  
to expunge the sins the fathers shout.

But can she wash away the distorted reflection,  
the accusing leather-bound memorabilia,  
she sees in the water you lend,  
the rancid water pooled in stained basins  
colored with jaundiced eye?

# Authority

Protected  
in the womb  
of your mighty power  
I remain.

My dependence  
feeds you.

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