

Maria Hagen

How I Compare to a Snail

You called me brave
for opening my heart to a page,

pouring out the deepest pain
into the blank expanse of white.

You called me brave, strong,
and it echoes in my skull,

hollow and empty,
for I know I am not brave.

I give my self to paper
but when a person,

with breath in his lungs
and blood in his veins

asks to know the forest of my soul,
I curl into the chambers of my heart,

a frightened snail, untrusting of the world,
and only hold up the shield of a smile.

