

coconut

twenty-five years on
the smell of coconut
body wash, shampoo, hand soap

still transports her back
to her naked teenage body
standing vulnerably
in a shower

being washed all over
by a familiar man
dressed in black police trousers
and white shirt

her voice was silent

she can only remember
his laugh
his mocking
his words
your thighs are so rough

from that point on
she hated
her skin
her self
a secret loathing
that she had no voice

Jo Beth Gray