

On The Firing of a Long Dead Muse

Heather Rhodes

How hard could it be?
 She's *dead* right?
Well, physically sure, but you know
 how muses can be.
Just so full of ideas, that
 didn't sizzle in the gas fire,
 or get soaked at the bottom of the sea,
 or get smothered like air from a smoker's black lung
 or suffocated in the oven.
It's my own fault, really, for leaving the door wide open.
 She sauntered in.
 I wanted her to.
We cried together, even wrote a few lines, when
 we weren't caught in our own crossfire.
And I loved playing boss to her subservient style, her pillbox lid and gloves.
 Sometimes,
 I didn't like what she had to say
 and if I fought her, she'd threaten
 to kill herself. (The girl had a sense of humor
 in her. I swear....)
I guess that's where the conflict of interest began.
 Pushy broad, like a tick burrowed in my skin.
 She stirred a whirling elixir that almost poisoned my pen.
 She wanted to take me with her.
Oh, but I stopped that and quick, mind you.
 I handed her the pink slip.
 I laid red tulips on her grave.