

Mystique #9  
*Antrell Vinnett*

Free from that constant drool;  
that free-flowing fountain  
of clear, bubbly ooze  
foaming from my infant's mouth.

Free from the nagging;  
the ten thousand different tones  
in which my toddler summons, "Mommy,  
I want this . . . I need that."

Free from the three-course dinner menu  
expected to be served promptly at six.  
Perfectly garnished, not too much salt –  
have to remember his cholesterol.

Free, just for this moment  
Free from the grocery list,  
my to-do list,  
my put this off until tomorrow list.  
It's just me and a three-inch barrel of Mystique #9.

Such a beautiful shade of shimmery bronze;  
The first shade I ever purchased for myself,  
and there it is –  
staring at me.

GAMBIT

Same shade I wore to my senior prom.  
Same shade I wore on my wedding day.  
Same shade I wore to my children's Christening.  
And, somehow,  
it's the same shade I'm wearing now.

I don't remember putting it on;  
It is such a lovely shade though.  
I can't put it back on the shelf used,  
So . . .  
I walk out.

Mystique #9 tucked in my pocket.  
I don't know why,  
but I smile.  
Liberation in a tube.