

MARY RUEFLE

Female Ruin

I am the queen of mosquitoes.
I am the queen of raw milk
and the stems of glasses.
I am the queen of batik
and new pine needles growing
out of the old. The queen of
phone cords and the roots of
river names and those little things
they stick on the ribs of the lamb
before bringing it to table —
paper frills. I am the queen of
ice cubes that stay in the tray
and the triangle all children
pick to play when they march.
The new moon loves me.
And all my subjects have disappeared.