

Ginger

after Delanie Wise

If a woman were a vase, could she carry herself?
If a woman were ginger, would she fit in a ginger jar?

Her ginger hair rises first from the lip of the jar,
nipped in from its wide hips, its generous belly. Her hair,

and then her forehead, eyebrows so pale as to be invisible,
her gaze bemused. Thin white straps cover her shoulders,

fabric draped over lean breasts, still firm and high.
Her hands rest on the rim, arms bent – do they push her up,

or ease her down? Delft-blue vines twine down the sides
of the ginger jar, up her waist, over her left breast,

as if to say, *Where are you going? Come back!*
What stays in the jar? Hips, moth-wings, braided bread,

baby shoes, a snow-globe from Niagra, tracing paper,
three daffodils, their blooms now papery, now faded.

What must she leave, and what must she take, borne
not in the earthen jar's belly, but on two feet only.

Frances Donovan

