

## VIEW FROM A LAUNDROMAT

Bearing our rags in boxes  
and duffel bags,  
we straggle in like nomads,  
democratized by socks gone  
stiff as death, alive  
to an inmate strip search  
and that display  
of skidmarks on torn,  
lemony jockey shorts,  
the sexual rust of panties,  
private flaws muzzled  
in meek, bluegray bras....

Even the light seems shamed,  
churned in cheap soaps, rinsed,  
spun dry and tumbled  
out of hell's throats limp,  
damp, dizzy with desire  
to be clean.

Week in,  
week out we return to this  
arcade and its squirrel cage whirr  
of two-bit turbines, where bleach  
and grim determination play  
a failed baptismal, and each  
disguise brightens  
only as it fades.

Lost in a squall  
of bored kids and nervous suds,  
our aim is the fresh  
start, order  
restored in plentiful folds,  
and that change of heart in which we  
forgive ourselves, poor  
but clean,

and never look back  
on our green time turned gray,

when the clotted dregs swirled  
like thick fog  
left behind in the lint-traps of our days.

DOUG MARX



NESKOWIN

Granville Bruce

## CHAPTER FOR THE INTERIM

I lost the ship behind the kitchen wall,  
Like a paper prayer, dropped through  
a knothole in the subfloor at the dedication.

Came unmoored, opened the spirit room  
in houses owned or borrowed.  
The foundation laid with reinforcing steel,  
the brickmasons' plumb lines went straight  
to the grain. In the flicker of a Monarch  
butterfly's damp wing out of the shell  
I mark that your hull is painted green.  
It will always seek land, whether earth  
under your fingers or placed on my tongue  
like the body at the rail.

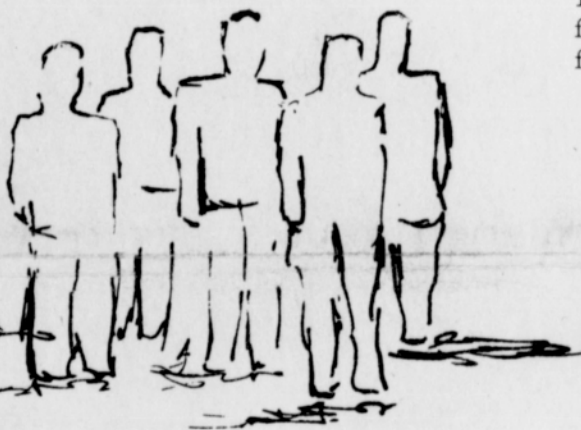
From the prow of this ephemeral house, I watch  
for fair weather, scan the entrails of dreams,  
fitting out for an auspicious launch.

RACHEL NOVA

I dreamt I had gone to the park  
at midnight to moonbathe  
and was busted  
for picking the plastic flowers.

I thought the crowd  
would hide me.

WALT LIVELY



Marge Buchman

## DOLORES

dolores I would have been you  
if I had been kinder, less willful  
in your flat, delicate shoes  
khaki coat, and your aged mother  
lingering in my antique shop  
on a grey afternoon  
dolores, in your mid-forties  
strong handsome face  
furrowed forehead; an eternal concern  
in your tired eyes  
and beside you, slightly cowed  
your intelligent husband  
low spoken, but I know  
fury lies beneath his placidity  
oh yes, I would have been you  
chattering to myself, observations  
interspersed with self-deprecation  
your double negative debate  
words have driven you  
crazy, crazy  
your words  
the words of other people  
never interlocking quite perfectly  
your face shows the struggle  
more than your husband's  
still seeking something, you are  
thwarted but not resigned  
is the self but an arena  
the physical, the simple animal  
versus centuries of complexity  
the mind settles for nothing less  
than omnipotence, and freedom  
to game with itself endlessly  
eluding sleep, the sea of wordlessness  
the conscious sparkles  
embers over the deep waters  
dolores do you fear the water  
perhaps it is what you are looking for  
I watch you slowly  
through undersea-light  
hovering around your poor old mother  
I am floating; cold and unmoved  
you are a warm-blooded woman  
whose heart has been broken  
but you go on  
weeping  
the pain of the world  
it is in your tears  
I lie submerged, I have only drowned  
myself in mine.

ROBERTA SCHANCK

## UNCOVERING A MINESHAFT

By accident we stumbled  
upon the last breath  
and knelt down, our one  
good ear tight against its lips  
and rotted teeth.

We could not tell  
if it was night or the eclipsing sun,

but from somewhere deep  
within its wound we heard  
drums and a circle  
of clapping bones closing in —

again the wooly mammoth  
being roused from its black  
slumbering dust...

Crude figures of men with sticks  
and mud-sling barrows illumined  
the cankerous mouth.

CRAIG CZURY

## SEARCH FOR YESTERDAY

You have denied me  
My birthright  
The traditions  
History and lore

The family tree  
Is surely planted  
Someplace and anchored

But I am unearthed  
With this unknown lineage  
I have no roots

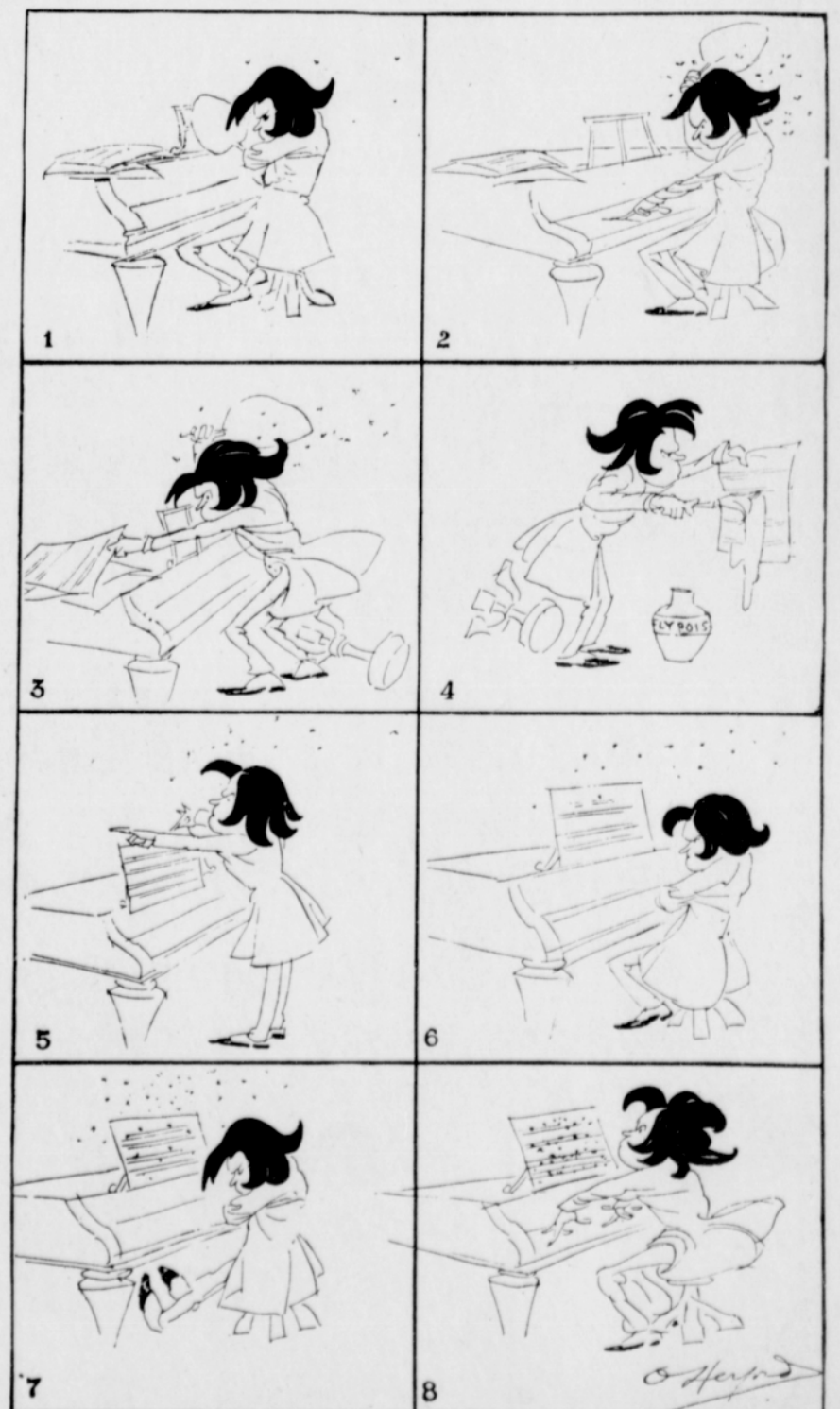
Though my bark  
Is aged and tough  
My insides still scatter  
In a balmy wind's breath.

DIDI S. DUBELYEW

## THE ROAD TO YOUR HOUSE

As if seeing you  
were not enough,  
I find the roadside  
embroidered  
with tufts of white  
and spikes of fragile purple.

ELIZABETH HOBBS



Summer Symphony