

GIANNA PATRIARCA

Big Woman Blues

put on the linen pants
sans the girdle
 a new top from the
 big lady store
 it teases
 with a hint of cleavage

puffed up the hair
 slipped on the purple sandals
 going shopping today

i will buy **you** a treat
you deserve it

must get that **Extract of Eden**
 creamy rich
 lightly scented
 promises to make you look
 like Eve

you're wondering what
 Eve looked like

Raphael knew
 or was it Caravaggio

no double chin on Eve
 no tributary lines on the largest
 organ
 did you know skin is an organ?

perhaps Eve had moles
 impossible
 tags maybe
 something to do with
 menopause
 or too much calcium
 is there calcium in paradise?

Gianna Patriarca's prose and poetry appears earlier in this volume.

the porous rock thing
 will smooth your heels
 it comes from the ocean
 healing
 something about salt

the esthetician said
you have lovely skin
you look much younger
 than your years
 don't know how she knew
 your years

soap and water
 has served **you** well

time out for coffee
 a poem or two
 you and Eliot counting spoons
 while women come
 and women go
 all very slowly
 on this Tuesday
 afternoon

TARA KAINER

This Yearning

The way you look
 at me I can tell
 you think I haven't
 noticed. Doesn't care
 Lets herself go
 Given up
 Those thoughts
 flit across your face
 like shadows
 on stagnant water.
 Not Life, I want
 to say, Men,
 but our relationship
 isn't so intimate as that.
 Anyway,
 it's the inexorable struggle
 against the role: you know,
 2000 years of false images?
 But I can tell
 by your
 gaze
 you fancy yourself
 a better judge
 of what woman is.
 This yearning you sense
 in my body, this desire,
 you read it all wrong:
 I long to walk off the stage,
 it says, For once
 let me be.

Tara Kainer has published poetry in literary journals and anthologies, as well as essays, articles, interviews and book reviews in newspapers, journals, and magazines. She lives and works in Kingston, Ontario. This poem appeared in her poetry collection, When I Think on Your Lives (Hidden Book Press, 2011). Reprinted with permission of the author.