

from the *Primal Curse* (Toronto, c. 1890), p. 312.

⁴See Wendy Mitchinson, "Causes of Disease in Women: The Case of Late 19th Century English Canada," in Charles Roland (ed.), *Health, Disease and Medicine: Essays in Canadian History* (Toronto, 1984), pp. 381-95.

⁵Alvin Wood Chase, *Chase's Recipes*

(London, Ont., 1873), p. 210.

⁶William Carpenter, *Principles of Human Physiology* (Philadelphia, 1847), pp. 911-12, 928-29.

⁷Henry Lyman, *The Practical Home Physician* (Guelph, 1892), p. 842; Alexander Skene, *Medical Gynecology: A Treatise on the Disease of Women from the Standpoint of the Physician* (New

York, 1895), pp. 72, 79.

⁸Skene, *Medical Gynecology*, pp. 80, 82.

⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 72, 79; Holbrook, *Parturition Without Pain*, p. 312.

¹⁰George Napheys, *The Physical Life of Woman: Maiden, Wife and Mother* (Toronto, 1890), p. 269.

ALISON HOPWOOD

Breakfast table

Too familiar to notice or think of
the table has its everyday look
butter is yellow marmalade orange
creamy brown coffee steams in its mug
slices of bread lie in their basket
between a vase of flowers from the
garden
and the bright rectangular toaster

Pushed the toaster lever goes down
but inside the firm solid shape
some connection is not made
black wires stay black
shining metal stays cold
gives no clue to the breakdown
between yesterday and today

Changed and changing
the flowers look different
funnels of lemon lily are twisted shut
bright poppies lie flat open
pale rose heads hang heavy
Stem leaf petal
are intricate and various

Buds are arrayed from stalk-green to
flower-yellow
orange saucers show off constellations
of pollen-tipped stamens around
swelling pistels
almost-grey sepals point back
to dark-green serrated leaves
Day lily Welsh poppy white rose
invite consideration

Strategies

The heron stands in the small pool
watching for frog or fish wary of us

We sit on a lot waiting too
our picnic lunch will not escape

Cautious we move hands to eat

the heron flies off

Rain pockmarks the grey lagoon
white swans ride steady

With coats buttoned hands gloved
we walk briskly

Rain comes down harder
we leave the park head for shelter

The white feathers shine
on the dark water

The snail retreats into its shell
the butterfly flits elusive out of reach
the bee stings the intruder

Lacking shell or wings
born weaponless
we think about survival

LORRAINE WHELAN

at the opening

he breathed the air in
and never let it go
his hand against his chest
his body expanding weird
the wool of his sweater
got caught in my eye
I was mesmerized
no — hypnotized

he said his name was Jacob
and I searched
for some significance
but momentarily
lost my memory
of everything but the blue
glaring circles
on his face

he was telling me stories

he was telling me lies
he said he had a brother-in-law
who was a professor of art
or mathematics, maybe
psychology or philosophy
whose name he did not know
he said he had a friend named 'Joe'

he said his family ran a gallery
where only family work was shown
every member was an artist
and had been since the Renaissance
but always, yes, always
they had to work to live
he said this gallery was in London
I tried to map it in my mind

I wanted to get away
I wanted to sip my champagne
but could not bring the glass
up to my face, over to my lips
unless I could look
and know that it was still
held in my hand

I wanted to turn my head
but it would not move
and I could not move
I stared
I could no longer
understand what he said
I could no longer
hear him
I said pardon
I said pardon

I thought I must be reading his lips
I was not looking at his lips
it was his eyes
they were talking
I thought he was insane
yet he must be skillful
to keep me there
in stillness
in a trance
as he transmitted
telepathic lies
to me