**RENEE NORMAN**

### Time in the Kitchen

heat from the vents
centres in the kitchen:
appliances played by hands
in a rhythm
lost if you don’t notice
when the dials spin
the way the blades turn
how the doors fly
*Lunch is ready!*
food marks the minutes
of the day
steadies the family
in four four time
1 2 3 heat
from her 3 4
1 2 body warning
temperature too hot
reduce time by minutes
add more flour
when you double the tempo
in the kitchen
for the congregation
play this scale in C minor
your mind on other staves
each note builds
just the odd falter
measure wash season measure
structure to this repetition
there are memories in this rhythm
in her motion
the same heat from the vents
*Lunch is ready!*

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### Dusting Off Willie Loman

dirt coats my fingertips
the telltale ink of my neglect
one cover folded back
the spine deformed
like an old woman
with a humpback

i dust off willie loman
elevate him to the ledge
beside hamlet king lear
death binds them
aristophane’s clouds and birds
hover nearby
a character in search of an author
i am no longer waiting for godot
or afraid of virginia woolf

but i wonder
as i neatly stack the plays
rows and rows of speeches and utterances
which i have
lived-recited-read-memorized-acted-analyzed-enjoyed
where were all the women playwrights?
how is it that only now
over 20 years later
i finally notice
all these fine and passionate words
were written by men

willie loman understands
the volume of the old woman
her back bent in shame

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Renee Norman’s poetry appears earlier in this volume.