ILONA MARTONFI

The Bus On Jarry Street

1.
Stone walls used as wild gardens:
roses, wisteria, fuchsia clematis.

Purple crabapple laden with fruit.

The first Sunday of July,
it was round five-o’clock,
I waited for the bus on Jarry Street:

A girl in blue t-shirt, white skirt.
Short cropped hair. The year was 1965.

Miron Quarry smokestacks.
Factory sheds. Barbed wire fence.
Field of dandelion snow.

I waited for the bus on Jarry Street.

When apart, we had sent each other letters.
April, I became pregnant.

The weight gain, the sore breasts, the lethargy.
Sleeping in a room I shared with my sister.

My parents’ crowded six-room cold flat:
Metal spiral staircase. Gray-painted balconies.

View over the Jean Talon Market.
Copper steeple of the Madonna Della Difesa
church.

Today at noon, my fidanzato came to speak to father:

“To make the wedding arrangements.”

An argument erupted:
“Leave!” father shouted.

2.
By bus, I rode across town:
went to my fiancé’s apartment and knocked.

“You didn’t warn me!” he raged.
Left me standing in the stairway. Shut the door.

I tried to remind myself, tomorrow morning,
I would be sitting at my desk at Bell Telephone.

Wear two girdles to hide my stomach.
Tally figures on an electric adding machine.

Lime-green chrome kitchen table. Unmatched chairs.
Flat brown scavengers. Cockroaches scurrying across the linoleum. Mother set the alarm for seven.

Head shrunk tight with rows of bristle rollers.
Saffron tulle kerchief. Cranberry-red lipstick.

I scooped one teaspoon of dried coffee granules:
poured boiling water. Added two lumps of sugar.

Ilona Martonfi’s poetry appears earlier in this volume.

FALL 2012

Flying Under Water
Poems New and Selected
by Eva Tihanyi

Anne Michaels calls Eva Tihanyi’s poetry “moving and powerful.” Susan Musgrave calls it “very accomplished, beautifully crafted.” Now, almost 30 years after her first book was published in 1983 comes Tihanyi’s latest collection, Flying Under Water: Poems New and Selected, which brings together the best of her previous six volumes plus a group of new poems.

www.inanna.ca
inanna.publications@inanna.ca