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?

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

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

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.