

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.*