

Willa Schneberg

The Junk Men

I can almost hear far off
a faint neighing and clopping,
wagons rattling,
a tinkle of bells
where the farms used to be,
when cows were milked by hand,
and cream topped tin pails.

Although I can't quite make out
your cries for schmattes,
I know what you were saying:
*What you don't want I want,
old, too big, too small, broke.*
I'm certain you carted away
radios with big dials stuck on one station
and toasters whose coils lost their glow,
but you never came to our door.

You have already vanished
into my dreams and my mother's
tales of her old neighborhood.

You wore gloves without fingers.
Soft knitted monkeys disappeared
inside your overcoats.
You did your shpiels,
sharpened knives, and took away
what was no longer loved.

Now you dwell in the land of the icebox
and the washboard, and I live in a tall building
that thrusts into the sky
with its elevators and incinerator chutes
for throwing away whatever we tire of.

Willa Schneberg has authored four poetry collections, and received the Oregon Book Award In Poetry for *In The Margins of The World*. *Storytelling In Cambodia* is her most recent full-length work. Among the journals and anthologies in which poems have appeared are: *American Poetry Review*, *Poet Lore*, *Salmagundi*, *The Village Voice*, *The Year's Best Fantasy and Horror*, *Nineteenth Annual Collection*, St. Martin's, and *Before There Is Nowhere to Stand: Palestine/Israel Poets Respond to the Struggle*, *Lost Horse*

Press. Garrison Keillor read her poems on The Writer's Almanac. A letterpress chapbook, *The Books of Esther* was produced in conjunction with her 2012 Oregon Jewish Museum interdisciplinary exhibit. *Rending the Garment* is forthcoming from Box Turtle Press. It will be the 8th title in the Mudfish Individual Poets Series.