

Valentine's Day

By your south porch where first jonquils
spear the sunlight, you carry your parasol,
bosom in brocade: new queen for the prairie.

Your boys stand before you, trooped in
their white collars and bowl haircuts, small
soldiers ready for anything after Sunday dinner.

Ancestor, you compose a formality of features
for a camera I cannot imagine Grandfather
aiming, who bought that car with its running

boards, but who never drove well. I guess
at the winds of that February day, how much
you ignored for the sake of a good impression.

I imagine the wild-eyed moments, whiskey breath
pushing at you again and again, and your silent
rising, dressing to tend flowers and boys.

S. Hind
Nov. '92
(rev. from Feb. '92)