

Rose Black

Bag Lady

but they the plastic bags that is keep flapping
from trees riding the wind turning

somersaults all down the street billowing
from fences like fat white flags

I pick them up to use again even the ones
with holes what are you doing here

tending this dead end street so sweetly as if it were
a garden I need to do things that need

doing that are possible to do in a place with a lot
of things that need doing in a place that has more
than its share more
than my share is what I have they are caught

in chain link stuck in the storm drains storm
drains suck them in suck them in to the ocean I can't

keep up millions and millions flapping
from trees on wind on water

SAFEWAY ingredients for life I need
to do things in a place with a lot

of things that need doing
what I speak of is

out of control
flying against walls

Galloping, Galloping

In sixth grade there was a boy his name was Tommy, and once Tommy took me to the movies, groped for my hand in the dark, my greasy hand with popcorn butter, nervous sweat. You needn't feel obliged, I said, having just learned the word obliged. Tommy took his hand away really fast, said, don't worry, while on the screen the war planes dive-bombed, exploded, burst apart.

Then the cowboys and the Indians, guns against the bows and arrows, but the Indians were trapped and didn't have a chance. I wiped my hand on my pants and slowly inched it back onto the arm rest that lay between us, the cowboys shooting from behind the rocks, then galloping, galloping hard out onto the open plain.