

## GOOD FRIDAY, 1971

*Leona Gom*

in the stiff hospital bed,  
 its iron sides raised and insulting,  
 the mound of your body  
 lies white-sheeted and still.

I know your eyes are open,  
 staring at the unblue ceiling,  
 but I stand at the door,  
 unable to intrude,  
 and wonder what images recolor  
 this pastel room for you,  
 what remembered sensations  
 are vying with your pain.

are you thinking of the homestead,  
 of the early years,  
 when you cleared the quarter by hand  
 and were always hungry and cold and unyielding;

or before that,  
 of the Old Country,  
 when you ran,  
 forever young then,  
 barefoot in the Bavarian hills;

or later,  
 of us,  
 born in this foreign land  
 of a foreign woman,  
 your children,  
 grown and educated now enough  
 to scorn farm  
 and Old Country;

or yesterday,  
 when the doctor told you the truth,  
 and there was nothing more to say?

then the nurse comes  
and says, "go on in;  
he's awake",  
and you turn your head  
and see me  
and we stare at each other,  
strangers, unknowing,  
across a distance  
as deep  
as your dying.

### SPECIMEN

*Leona Gom*

Click,  
and I have you again,  
preserved in my camera killing jar.

We walk on,  
my black bangle with its secret coils  
dangling deadly from my wrist,  
large eye alert  
for some new scene  
in which to capture you.

I smile smugly,  
thinking of the future,  
when you'd think you'd left me  
but when I would have you still,  
a mounted insect  
pressed and pinned within the walls  
of my formaldehyded photographs.