

HERE'S TO THE HIGH HEELS

Here's to the high heels I'm wearing
and here's to all the high heels I've worn —
clean out my closets
from here to Saskatchewan,
enough spiked heels
to provide harrows
for every tired old farm
that failed and tried,
and failed again
in the kindom of russian thistle
and burnt out wives.

Here's to all the others
who dance in high-heeled shoes
(not many of us left)
Betty Grable died today,
she of the most beautiful legs
that continued on up
where her hips should be,
pillars of black lace,
frilled roofing —
startled moons where her eyebrows
sang.

Rent us a dance hall
with strenuous floor
over the garage
with red wire gas pumps —
we'll sweat up January for you
we'll smear on lipstick
six times before intermission,
pat on powder through fences
of conversation,
we'll hold the music wide and blowy
to spill out the years,
side-swipe all bondage
wilder than youth
to catch,
reconstruct dreams
in fly-specked corners.

Oh bury us soggy at five a.m.,
heaped up high
on a hobble of memory,
legacies of fatty hearts,

sideroads
to heaven, and Gary Cooper.

— *Patricia Elliott*