

SAILING TO AIAIA

by Ken Samberg

She put her arm through mine
insisted she was no longer timid
over bran muffins and coffee
crying beauty to bewitch men coasting by.

Coffee again. "I am no longer timid.
Why are the curtains closed?" She walked to the windows,
flung the curtains wide open at 2 a.m.
bones of dead men rotting in a pile.

Sunday afternoon she wore dark glasses
"The sun is bright, I can't stand the sun
and my allergies are acting up again."
Flayed skins shrivel around the spot.

Tuesday night. She sang her song
over the telephone wire, misery trilled
the telephone wire. "I'll let you go now"—
you may hear those harpies' thrilling voices.

I know her song, have sung it loud and long,
know the agony is her own.
For myself, I've work to do:
keep their stroke up, till the singers fade.

*One of two courses you may take,
and you yourself must weigh them.
I shall not plan the whole action for you now,
but only tell you of both. . . .*