

lilacs for karen

by EL Williams

wrapped in a blanket,
soft and wet,
sterilized by the salt
of my hungry tears,
i protect the only remaining piece
that i have left
of you

when the scent of perfume
that you used to wear
carries my mind
but what does one do with the pain of memory
down a river of flesh

and
white skin,
and leaves me aching again
with the thought of you?

a monk from an atheist,
or walk out of reality
into my monastery
half believing that you could make
of doubt.

my cathedral is to the god
of your memory,

the stained-glass sadness
of your child eyes
and the feather soft beauty
of secret breasts
that sent cold chills
tripping up and down
my spine

when i sought redemption
in the trinity of our three times.

i will die an athiest to world religions
and probably live an eternity
without the soft kiss
of your young worship;
but i'll forever chase
 the shadow of your memory
through the chambers of my mind
and beg of god

the right to remember you
eternally.

The Man in the Iron Cage

by Diane Vavul

The man in the iron cage
Sent out for some paint one day
And painted his bars gold.
All the outsiders admired his home
And copied his chamber
With real gold in their suburbs.
Within three weeks
All of America was locked up,
While the caged man's bars
Tarnished, rusted, broke,
And he was free
To stroll around his gigantic zoo.