**Autumn**

Among the unforeseen
the will is not enough.
By the river the air rusts.
These bright things
lacking shapelessness,
a brother who is dead
a long time.

A swimmer slips
against the rustling current,
and for miles,
the eye silts over.
He enters through the skin.

In time the skin unfolds
its crystal. Breath.
The countable exclusions of the breath.
The air winters
north of here.

Kim Maltman.

**Monday We Wash**

Her curled paw swabbing the air with dangerous joy,
three year old Molly, snowsued and gloved,
lumbers out of the car for school.
Afterwards, I turn home to lug baskets of dirty winter
already gray from overbleaching
to the washerwoman, memory
whose expert hands once more plunge and scrub,
who soaps and plumps the jumbled trees,
who flings and snaps the sky to blue.
Her land leads north to fear
through meadows whose tidy grass is marked
by prints where bears have danced.

Jeanne Murray Walker.