

# Hunger

by Sian Barbara Allen

*for E.*

Famished I met you  
and even hungrier after  
rising and rising the  
chart of a serious fever.  
I wrote you a letter each day of the summer  
but I only mailed one because you  
can't talk about hunger.

I came back and saw you  
and I doubled over with longing  
I kissed you and kissed you  
and thought I'd go crazy, this hunger  
was making me cry in all of my classes  
so I went up to Berkeley to learn to better my Gaelic.

On the corner of Telegraph and Bancroft  
waiting for taxis  
I saw you get out of a car.  
I ran after you joyous  
only to wake up in the Zoological Building  
so I thought I would go to a priest  
and ask about hunger.

I went to a mass at Saint Mary Margaret's  
in Oakland  
and found myself in the confessional  
*Father, Sir, I said*  
*I have a terrible hunger*

"Are you calling me Sir?" he asked  
"You know Father's just fine."  
*Sir Father* I said *I'm fainting I'm just really starving*  
"A physical hunger?" he asked and then I  
was silent  
"A spiritual hunger?"  
I realized that I shouldn't be there.  
*I've got to go write a letter thank you* I said as I left him  
"Do you live in the parish?"  
*No, I'm renting Naomi's apartment.*

Naomi's dissertation was called  
"The Settlement of Paraguayan Jews in the South Bay".  
She had bones that I had to dust  
on all of her tables.  
And I wrote you two letters each day of the summer  
but I only mailed one because you  
can't talk about hunger.

