

Bobbie R. Coleman

Washday

“Hang out the wash!” she bellows,
passes me a basketful dingy white and dripping.
I scrape caked bird shit from rusty clothesline
bend down to reach
for laundry, wringing wet:
Socks, hankies, t-shirts,
my father’s underwear mysterious and lewd
I almost blush to handle it.
My friends are at the movies,
flirting at the beach,
practicing the latest dance steps,
while I clip clothespins to corners of cloth,
precise as Rockettes,
and wait for a wind to carry me
away with the sheets.