

*Annette Cenkner*

## **Effigy**

Imprint of your hand remains from last embrace,  
circles of teeth still brand my thighs.  
My life was projected onto your face,  
every trivial detail was scrutinized.

Bound by your whim I would lie in wait,  
for sleepless nights, your obedient whore.  
Wishing I was meant for a better fate,  
than a laundromat, convenience store,

and a pitbull who eats small children bit by bit.  
Submission only whet your appetite.  
Your friends who only knew me bitch by bitch,  
hoped I would fade forever from their sight.  
And then you who ate my soul wish by wish  
While I bared my chest to your brutal bite.

## Gossip

It's not true  
Those things they say about me.  
They think I mourned my dead cat too long.  
And they feel there must be something wrong  
With a person who grieves the death of their parents  
Even though they're still alive.  
But I say you can't get started too soon  
On a big project like that.

Behind my back they all decided  
That my hair is too blonde  
And my skirts are too tight  
And my friends are all criminals  
And I must be a lesbian.

I must admit though,  
Sometimes I get drunk at parties  
And my car is always dirty.  
And I eat out more than I cook.  
I talk too much and too loudly,  
And when I heard the news  
about Jim & Tammy Bakker  
I said, "I told you so," to everyone I knew.

But, other than that,  
they are all vicious lies.  
I did not throw myself on the coffin  
Of my friend who died of AIDS.  
I never shed a tear when Jeannie wrapped her car

And her beautiful, young body  
Around that telephone pole.  
Not a drop left my eye for Grandma or Uncle Ken.  
So you see,  
When they tell you that I wept for days and days  
Until they all thought I would die from a broken heart,  
You shouldn't believe them.