

**fragile**

late again down Lankershim to the freeway,  
spilled coffee dribbling between shabby seats,  
he thought at first the pigeon plump and white in  
the line of traffic was pecking at popcorn  
bouncing in the street until it struck him  
no sane pigeon would be hopping up and down in  
8 a.m. congestion and popcorn couldn't float  
up and down even in the currents  
from a thousand cars

and then he was passing  
the auto parts emporium, shifting  
his lame shoulder, passing  
the pigeon feathers, the shut-down  
surplus store whose baby-shit yellow  
walls had grown giant white mouths that  
howled in black and red  
GOING OUT OF BUSINESS

**WE'LL MISS YOU** and he was passing  
the clock at the corner  
still on standard time and  
then the bus stop, two prep-dressed men  
pointing with upstretched arms and  
white smiles in the sun to the top  
of the new high-rise offices, and scrap paper  
swirled in exhaust and  
he strained to see in his rear-view

mirror the wounded bird as he thought of silver  
pigeons that swoop under gray freeways, or  
iridescent necks that peck at  
stained sidewalks, survivors, but  
all he could see was the smudged collage  
of Los Angeles and he passed  
the same bent Chicana he saw most  
mornings and he stiffened  
his back against the ripped seat

## Singing Bowl

I am round, heavy  
with sound dwelling unexpressed  
in my bronze bowl self,  
a singing bowl of Tibetan birth,  
prized only by ones who know  
me—know the way  
to stroke the slow and steady  
thrum around inside  
my rim, around and round  
until I hum  
the world harmonious  
deep within your being,  
upward, downward,  
waves of sound expanding  
with each circle—  
sound into sound  
surrounding home until  
the strokes can end  
and I can sing  
and ring and gently hum  
then slowly bow  
to silence, resonant  
with sound