Desertions

Dennis Ellman
In the back row someone is holding a garbage can cover behind a woman’s head. We are making progress. See? Most of us are showing you the insides of our hands.

Robert L. McRoberts

DESERTIONS

I have deserted the causes of my dreams. The men I adore have perished. The women open their blouses and air falls out, plump and empty.

I have deserted the music of my friends; dark notes, fantasies. I have taken my destiny out of their soft hands.

All my country, its vast lakes of despair, its mountains, equal to a single pebble in my shoe, a dampness beneath the sun’s perception.

A man passes me on the street. His face is like my father’s; strong and old: A sycamore by a white stream—

And I desert him; even as I pass I am deserting him, leaf by leaf, each light branch, vanishing.

Dennis Ellman