

Barbara Adams

AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS

Every window tries to sell me
a bride, a baby,
a water bed, a Bible,
baubles cheap and fragile.

I walk beside a self-made
vampire
heading for the vanishing point.
He has discovered too late
his victims have no blood.

I pass my student, Seth,
the baker's son,
among his sweets and bagels.
Adding up the day's take,
he leaves out
the milk and honey.

I put on a book jacket
to keep warm.
My possessors glare at me--
Stevens, Plath, Dickinson,
they don't know the professor
who asked me--
Is there a prophet-ess
for you women who write
say like Whitman, Blake, or Eliot?
I was polite,
you son of a bitch.

I am at the crossroads
leaving behind my cut-outs
stuck on kitchenware, pots and pans,
eye-round roasts, blue jeans,
Brentano's discounts
and all revolving doors.

From here on
I will make my own map.
If you want to find me
look for me
under your earth shoes.