

Starlings fall from his cap,  
Children run through his legs, brushing  
The quiet snowfall of dust  
Off his boots.



## David Gerry

my mother wore a rose in her hair

painted her Mexican skin pale  
with powder

skated round and round  
her body not yet feeling its heat  
sixteen was still young then  
it was Green's Ice Pond on Rindge Rd  
there were men there—they watched  
her as they worked—cut blocks of ice  
to keep Fitchburg's ice boxes cold  
they watched her whitened face  
as she tried to blend in with the white landscape  
of New England.

that was Fitchburg  
the place of her birth not blood  
there those men sat on blocks of ice  
as if to cool themselves  
watched from a distance  
the movement of her body  
her anthracite hair shining like a skate blade

later when it was summer  
her brown skin exposed, offered  
herself with a rose in her hair  
to my Yankee father.