

## The Writers Gathering in a Dream

by Diana Raab

The lead poet is an Irishman  
who reads enticing poems in brogue  
to an audience of poets and their friends.  
He looks right at me when he reads  
the poem about when he first met  
his love at a bar.  
I arrive in my tight purple velvet dress  
and glistening jewels  
in celebration of surviving cancer.  
I want to saturate myself  
with wise writers' words.  
I take notes and by the end  
I've already created my first poem.  
When I get up to leave  
I discover I'm almost naked,  
my clothes are torn to shreds,  
strewn about my body.  
What's left dangles above the industrial blue carpet:  
sleeves of my dress barely suspended  
from my shoulders, the V-neck  
torn down to my navel and my nylons  
with runs from crotch to toes.  
I look up at the Irishman and  
he smiles at me, knowing  
that he undressed me,  
and with his eyes made me naked  
in front of everyone.  
I want to become invisible—  
but everyone will notice my bare ass,  
unshaven legs and lopsided breasts,  
as he looked twice  
at the large scar removing my right breast.  
Perhaps the attendees will ask  
how dare I leave such an event completely nude.  
But I don't care, as my surgeon told  
me to flaunt it whenever I could.  
I point my crooked finger at The Irishman  
and told him it was all his fault  
and to leave me alone now.