

## Four Poems · *Lawrence Arancio*

### VERONICAS

After fifteen minutes I realized  
she wasn't going to get her lipstick right.  
The blinding compact mirror  
the pile of wounded napkins  
the uncontrollable hose of red  
held like an ice cream cone  
stabbing the battered face.  
Catching her breath, one by one  
she flattened out the napkins  
and read each wrinkled Rorschach  
like the steaming viscera of a sacred bull.

### ANSWER MAN

There was a shopping cart  
near a fruit stand and  
I threw my clothes over it  
thinking no one respects  
the neighborhood anymore.  
I wheeled the cart on the curb  
and ran into Olga  
who was complaining  
she was out at the cemetery  
in Queens and just anyone  
could dig up anyone's remains  
it was the law now  
so it was hard to find your own  
(although the law was made  
to help you find your own)  
and the sun was the yellow  
of youth and perpetual summer.