

Fleda Brown Jackson

I VISIT THE TWENTY-FOUR HOUR COIN-OP CHURCH OF ELVIS
—Portland, Oregon

Well, sure, it's only
a window in a brick wall,
and eight small, seven large, circular framed Elvis-faces
that spin when you put fifty cents in.
The computer screen asks you what you want: wedding, confession, or what.
I got my personal Elvis I.D. card:
*The bearer of this card is a SAINT in the Church of Elvis.
He or she may also be Elvis. Please treat them
accordingly. Thank you.*
The faces were spinning like 45s
and I was combing my hair in the plastic reflections,
fixing my lipstick. It was a subtle change.
I think I am probably Elvis. I have begun to feel like
a lost child in Portland, anyway,
to feel uncertainty about my life,
to feel a religious determination to make my words sing.
I was crossing Ramsey Boulevard to meet you here for lunch,
keeping my hips loose, my sunglasses on.
Didn't I order a cheeseburger for the first time in years?
And I feel I am gradually being purified
of my irony,
back to the true rock and roll.
I want to run my fingers through what hair you have left
and call you Baby, throatily,
and mean for you to Treat Me Accordingly.
We could do our wedding vows again.
I feel we could get all the way back to the original vows,
before our separate cosmic fractures,
the vows we made years ago to other people
that had no irony whatsoever,
that were all Love Me Tender, all Heartbreak Hotel.