

and I didn't have a car.
Sometimes on winter afternoons
when the babies were taking their naps,
I'd call the bus depot
and ask how much it cost
to get to different places
like Baltimore, or Atlanta, Ga.
It was \$68.50 one way to San Francisco,
forty bucks more if you came right back.
I almost called today
to see if the price had changed.
It was good to know
you didn't have to be rich
to get somewhere.

AMELIA

I am impressed by the story
of my mother-in-law's neighbor,
a lady named Amelia
who looks like a side of beef on wedgies.
Amelia has grey hair
and every other word she says is,
"goddammit."
Indoors and outdoors, she wears a mumu,
smokes Camels, carries a poodle.
On fine days, when windows are open,
you can hear Amelia cough
all over the neighborhood --
"goddammit this ... goddammit that."
She's outlived two husbands.
Here's the part that gets me.
When she ran off with the second one,
Amelia's first husband
drank prussic acid.
The neighbors say
she must be some woman.

-- Barbara Drake

Okemos MI

attic
box of
memoirs
pen tracks
on mildew

seen
a
caftan
of many
colors