

Elaine Bander

Honourable Discharge

Most of all I missed the uniform.
The Army sheltered us from necessary choices.

And the girls, of course: Bea, Peggy, we
three women past thirty, surviving together

a hurricane in Atlantic City,
hominy grits in Georgia.

Washing our nylons in the barracks, giggling
like girls again, talking into the night.

(And Charlie. But I never think of Charlie:
whiskey kisses, clutching me and begging.
How could I, with a husband overseas?)

Khaki serge, brass buttons, PX nylons:
my size ten uniform hanging in the closet

the day I wore my pre-War fox-trimmed walking suit
to meet the train that brought my husband home.

Elaine Bander teaches English at Dawson College in Montreal. Her poetry has appeared previously in **WLA** 11.2.