

JEAN THORNTON

EACH YEAR THE LILAC

Each year the lilac
outside my bedroom window
gives notice of season's end
sending leaves to the ground
in fluttering concern (languid
or harried, according to whim
of breeze coming up from the bay).
At each twig-leaf disjuncture
the scar heals: no bleeding wound,
no wasting sap, only a closing
of exit to be re-opened in Spring.

When first I came to the weatherboard
house winter held thrall. The lilac
stood stark outside the window, a switch
of bare twigs. Helpers said 'Destroy
the ugly thing.' The lilac resisted
tugs of hand, digs of spade, hacks of saw
and knowingly awaited its rightful time.

JILL JONES

PLASTIC DINOSAURS

Dolores the Tyrannosaurus used to stand on my desk
next to the phone though she never answered it
she offered no protection only her offwhite plastic skeleton
five inches high and her mouth wide in a smile
more friendly than the modern monsters
poisonous in their ground floor offices

so I preferred to curl up quietly with her behind the orange screens
and meditate on the back alleys
outside the window
letting my imagination slither
helplessly

Dolores has retired to my kitchen now
to play with Brenda Brontosaurus on the refrigerator
plastic dinosaurs just as helpless as they ever were
while I've crawled up from the ground floor
but Dolores catches me sometimes with her empty eyes
and I'm running again
along another back street
I thought I'd forgotten

ROBERT HANDICOTT

CHOKA: TABEBUIA ROSEA

Men with chainsaws have
Advanced along the footpath,
Leaving us a grim
Row of ghastly amputees.
Sagging power lines
Are safe now for years to come.
So easy to slump:
Give up. What's the use? — But watch
The pink ball flower's
Mute slow-motion sky-rockets
Signal the sap's defiance!