

Laundromat

SHEILA GOLBURGH JOHNSON

Out of the washer
endlessly swirling,
damp and wrinkled
and knotted from harsh
baptism, they emerge
for a moment in
chemical scented air,
then plunge to a second
ordeal.

I watch them roughly
tumble, become limber,
writhing in the hot linted
chamber, flying up and
down in an unbearable
lightness of being.

A man glances up
but looks back quickly
at his own circle,
caught in dark shades
that change shape even
as he stares.

All fall to rest in sudden
silence, as if the current
of the world had stopped.
We sit immobile, reluctant
to open the doors, tempted
to walk away.