

CLARK

In Your Backyard

There. A woman has been for hours
whirling

in a blue dress. Her eyes whiten.
Some of you know

that she sees inward
to a deserted dance floor. All afternoon

she has been whirling, waiting
for dancers to appear. All afternoon

her skirt has spun
above her wet and reddening thighs.

A man in a dark suit
enters, then another.

The room fills with sad men
in dark suits, groups of them scudding

like black clouds
across the white tiles. Some of you know

their mumbled dialect. But she
can understand only

a few words: *element, faction, cunt.*

If she dances in your backyard, and you are

you think she's crazy, you want to explain
to her the absurdity

of her dance. "Have dinner,"
you want to say. "Rest."

And yet, if you are a woman,
you are mesmerized by the blue

dusk
spinning in such fine circles

from her skirt. You tell the man
standing next to you, yes,

she *is* sad, but so beautiful.
You watch

his confusion draw him quickly
onto her floor.