Delores Gauntlett

POCOMANIA

It could have been how Sister Barclay swung her skirt and thrashed the tambourine in the rapture of the unfinished day quick-stepping under the spirit’s influence,

or when Elder Shaw tiptoed with the Bible in a stranglehold in one hand, and the Psalm took root, and the platform trembled under him;

or when he pried the crowd pacing pulpit and pew and emerged with a string of hallelujas and a swift balm, and willed them to be done with the heartache and the blues.

But something else came over the make-do church when the bareheaded girl knelt and rolled in astonishment, and crawled her way to God across the cold concrete,

and without apparent care coiled loose from the heartbreak pounding in her head, her soul stirred in the ecstasy of Pentecost.

Though what did I know at eight about the bends they crossed to that shelter from the storm?