

University in Montréal. She is an activist and researcher, with a focus on Canadian lesbian and queer women's culture and realities in both urban and rural locations. She is the programmer and co-host for CKUT community radio's program Dykes on Mykes, and is a contributor to nomorepotluck.org.

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¹Le Boudoir has been described as "a magical evening of retro entertainment, silent films, and circus acts" for lesbian and queer women in Montréal. It has been presented annually for the past 12 years and is a "mainstay of the city's queer cultural scene."

References

- Gross, Larry. *Up From Invisibility: Lesbians, Gay Men and The Media in America*. New York: Columbia University Press. 2001.
- Le Boudoir. Online: <http://www.leboudoir.org/home.html>. Accessed January 12, 2007.

ANN ELIZABETH CARSON

A STORY

My grandfather made my grandmother
cut off her long chestnut hair
and throw it in the garbage. Because
it was unseemly, in a married woman.
My mother heard her cry through the closed
door.
It was the only time she heard her cry. No one
was ever the same.

I don't know
how old my Mother was
or how she happened to be near
when she heard her Mother cry.
I don't know how she knew
what her Father had done
to her Mother

for her to cry so loud that
she was heard that one time.

Or how she knew – there was
no speaking –
that it wasn't the only time,
just the heard time.
(The length of her hair?)
But she heard and she knew.
That much is certain.

I don't remember when
my mother told me her mother's story,
except that I was a woman then,
with her own first daughter,
my grandmother long dead. Was she
the first to speak?

Already I knew

that part of my grandmother's "never the
same"
was not answering the call her husband heard
to minister in Cleveland.
She didn't follow him. Against the grain, she
left him, came
To live with one of her unmarried daughters.
Opened a space for speaking.

Did my mother tell me
because I was the oldest daughter?
Or because I now had children and should
hear it?

Why do I think she would think I should hear
it?

Did she speak out
because she needed to pass it on
to the next generation of (procreative)
women?

I don't know whether my sister heard
our grandmother's story. We've never talked
about it.
Until now my children know her story only
In the ways I have lived my life,
-just as my mother knew her mother's story
– in
daily no-word ways which tell, and re-tell
our stories

Ann Elizabeth Carson's poetry appears earlier in this volume.