

Dianna MacKinnon Henning

Prison Portrait

Housed in a cell, the soul
squats in a cement corner.
It hums like the defunct hanging
alcoves of Old Folsom.

Some men break down,
go mad, while a few,
mostly the young, make do
on the salt and bread of labor;
each day a gray wipe-out
in the State's fortress.

Outside, concertina wire twangs.
It's no dance tune. Prisoners know
work boots aren't made for dancing,
nor do shackled feet shuffle
to any old razzamatazz.