

“Karmic Oats”

When nine planets que up in Scorpio
the Earthlings revolt. It's Breeze
by a landslide, Huzza! the first woman
mayor of New York. Breeze makes
Cynthia Ozick chief-of-staff and gets
on the horn toute suite. She bans
Pampers within city limits. Death to white
sugar. The landlords and baby rapers
swing like sausage over Brooklyn Bridge.

After seven weeks, Breeze takes a nose
cone in the neck from a paid assassin
and is reborn as a night watchman
at a gallery uptown, and as she rides
the A Train from the Bowery
she chants prayers in Tibetan. Everyone assumes
Breeze is crazy, so who wouldn't
—this chanting could be coming from the bowels
of the earth, louder than boomboxes,

swaying and grooving in Tibetan from downtown
through midtown through Harlem, and so Breeze
(now a baritone named George) is never threatened.
George works graveyard shift, has one green
eye and one yellow eye and owns three TVs.
Sometimes the chants brush a sore spot, and without
warning, George finds himself flooded with tears.
He's late for work when he tarries in the park
to compose his face. His boss, a brisk young

woman with two master's degrees and a mean grin,
docks him for his tardiness. How can George explain?
LaBoss keeps a spare pair of panty hose in her old
oak desk. She'll buck for Mayor's Council on the Arts.
She'll wage a raging campaign for mayor
while George watches on his TVs. He's
rooting for her. He'd like a new
boss, but he's forgiven her—anything
else is just too much trouble. And she will win.