

EVELINE PYE

Love of Algebra

She says, "You know how you get it
and then you forget it", and I smile,
nod - but really, I don't -
can't even imagine. How does
the dancer forget dancing,
the singer forget singing? How could
I ever not know how to solve
simultaneous equations?
It would be like forgetting
how to breathe or laugh or love.
You'd have to dissect my brain
scour out layer after layer of tissue
with steel wool, and even then
if you left me one tiny cell,
the knowledge would grow back,
and if you were to succeed,
to wipe out every trace,
I'd be a lost soul.
I'd never give up. I'd chew on my pencil
night and day to recapture that feeling,
that moment when I grasped the life line.