

Note to Ex-Husband

That old jacket (the one with just the right slouch)
has been found
in clothes for the Sally Ann
by mistake. You called several times.

I picked the pockets long ago,
found nothing but the gritty lint of bad times;
not one pinched penny,
no rumpled hankie softened by my tears
or hardened by the snot of your anger,
no ticket stubs for puny promises,
no endless lists for domestic harmony,
and that pen you lost
which produced a sulk lasting long as winter,
heavy as wet snow,
it isn't there.

The jacket that wore you
smells like a stale Christmas tree,
shed of its light;
makes a handy gift
from the heartless to the homeless.

ELIZABET STEVENS