

DRESSING FOR THE DAY

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I have to buy a black dress
not another little trapeze one like I wear for cocktails
nor one with a full, floor length skirt
I might wear to the opera.

No . . . I need a simple straight dress
that hits at the knee
to wear with a single
strain of pearls. . . faux or real.
I see a rack of glass beads
white with china blue swirls
I hear myself say
Mom would like these...
and force myself to turn away
to find the dresses,

Unable to decide
I let the sales clerk choose.
Her choice a little black sheath
that falls mid-calf
with a black polk-a-dot jacket
and white-broad brim hat
with tulle and feathers.
The hat didn't make me look proper,
like a British Lady on Derby day
Not the way it would have you
---but it was hot at Lucas Place---
Grave-side funeral---
---- it didn't matter.