

"Vengeance"

Perhaps one could write a play about it?
I see a fifteen-foot stool on the stage
with stepladder rungs: your building, clerk's cage,
your victim's cell and your childhood and bus.

The clipping is datelined Rosario,
Argentina. You were Catholic, of course.
At some point in the play you'd say your beads.
I did not take down the year. *Ship Movements*
read: "*Sunmar* from San Domingo Thursday."

December 13,

the '60's then, when your father's killer
was let out of prison, you left your bank
in Buenos Aires, sat 200 miles,
got off the bus, knocked and shot him and jumped
from the eleventh rung of the stool. Note:
You left a note in your bank teller's purse.

On top of the stool will sit Justice in black.
A midget, of course, at that height. A freak
on sideshow exhibition. He'll rap out
your father's murderer's sentence: "Six years".
You were 12, Celia Ramona Jaime.
Old enough to make a vow. And pretty
at 18, it says. You'll jump to begin the play.

—Clifton Whiten