

FROM OUR READERS

Changing Course

*By Anita Nevins Brown
Sacramento, California*

Often you have snared me, but
this time, Mara, I knew my
song would bring you
thundering, rattling
the bars of my cell,
using your wiles
to distract me from the open
cage door. Mara, blow your smoke
in my face. Scratch at my
chest with talons honed sharp
on old fears. Whisper marching
orders and croon that old number
about how this course
is too dangerous
for me. Offer to bury
me under a pile of
your old
newsprint until
the pressure
tapers off.
Pressure on
whom, Mara?
Remember it
was I summoned
you, my
friend. At last
I know what to do
with old
news. My body
is a reed turning
toward the sun. My prayer
a small flame trembling amid
ashes. In my throat
recurrent calling of a goldfinch
in wind. In my ears the piercing echo
of an unseen phoenix.

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Author: Anita Nevins Brown

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