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Excess Baggage

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I'm leaving for New York in five days.
My life is divided into segments all over my room:
Eleven pairs of pants lined up in the hall,
Five piles: jackets—shirts—sweaters—pajamas—misc.,
   each on a corner of my bed
   one in the middle.
There's portable entertainment (books, music, journals)
   under the window.
I'm shutting my whole skeleton into one checked bag
   and two carry-ons.

I can see it now.

My shell will be standing, for the first time,
in the white frosted grid that is Manhattan;
Waiting for everything that fits inside of me
to come around on baggage claim.
It's only hours later I will discover
that all my wooly winter wear will be enjoying
two fun-filled days,
basking in the heat of the Big Island,
Hawaii.
At least in my backpack I'll have an extra change of clothes.
Including three pairs of panties
that will have been excavated
by at least four pairs of hands
by the time I wrench myself
out of the security station at JFK.
911? What is the emergency?
   God bless the out-of-towner.

Welcome to my commercial life.
Some people think I am a walking advertisement
for the so-called individual.
The punk kid
who spent fifty dollars on her torn jeans.
The hippie chick
who bought her broomstick skirts on eBay.

This is why I hope American Airlines
does send my bag to anywhere in the world
except New York City.
I can see then if it is still possible to exist.
To still be alive without all the crap that other people
have created,
things that in turn
have created me.

I’m leaving for New York in five days.
I better start packing.