

Catherine Chandler

Of Diminished Things

Each morning at exactly nine o'clock,
our fellowship of grizzle-headed men
meets at McDonald's, métro Frontenac.
We take our customary seats, and then,
despite the posted warning, "PAS DE FLÂNAGE,"
drink discount coffee for an hour or two,
surrounded by a motley entourage
of students, "filles," families — and you,
who snicker at our mild grandiloquence;
who live, for now, in Never Never Land;
who think life's written in the present tense;
who evidently cannot understand
our joie de vivre, or grant that it's no crime
to squander what one's left of change and time.

Ghazal

A farmer celebrates the clouds and rain,
his thirsting field awaits the clouds and rain.
A weatherman without an ounce of pride
grins and guesstimates the clouds and rain.
A woman reels her clothes in from the line
as thunder iterates the clouds and rain.
A pallid tourist in Miami Beach
broods in his room and hates the clouds and rain.
A fierce wind gusting down from Canada
swiftly expatriates the clouds and rain.
An artist, palette smeared in shades of grey,
paints and recreates the clouds and rain.
A poet pens her sorrow and despair,
weeps and articulates the clouds and rain.
In pure delight she'll praise the newborn day
as sun evaporates the clouds and rain.