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Wintertime Scene

Saša Skenderija

It rained all night and the first snow showed up in the morning. But the café is cozy. You can sip hot coffee and look out the window at the street. The whiteness emphasizes shapes, movements, the day's subtle mechanics. Here on the terrace, last summer there was a huge video screen. Now it's just an empty steel square. Quite by chance it frames the winter: a cloud of steam from the hotel kitchen, a VW backs up its tailpipe scattering a flock of pigeons, an old woman with a red market bag slides along the sidewalk, streetcars cross paths before the army barracks, and over there in the corner, a lonely child.

The movie of the day winds on, all by itself, without apparent effort, affording you a chance to forget for a moment that your own eye's gravity and the empty steel frame are all that keeps your country in one piece.

Translated by Wayles Browne – © 2008 Wayles Browne

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