

Iowa Saturday Night

The girls of Grundy Center
(breast-deep in bubbles)
are rubbing boys into their skin.

Over basins of hair curlers
and flattened tooth paste tubes
steam writes "I love you" on the mirror.

In pinup pasted bedrooms, observe
yellow dresses and pink panties:
butterflies on a summer lawn.

Village Vignette

The sun breaks through a wet cloud,
sweet as a breakfast bun,
and my village of flags
opens up like a bright bird.

See kitchen chairs beneath the trees
and oranges eaten in hammocks.
See the buzzing grapes, the hedge of boys.

An American holiday drones on.

Upstairs behind blue doors, I sleep:
the prince of clocks and candles.

-- D. P. Etter

The Book Store

Inside
under the buzzing tubes of light
the cashier
knows where everything is.
She wears
a green smock and listens.
A fat man
his jacket hanging
on his arm
breathes with his nose
while pages tick
out from under his thumb.

-- James Hazard

Oshkosh, Wisconsin