

Live In The Mood

MARK TAKSA

My toes under a bench, I could be floating
as I watch breeze bend the passersby.
I consider reports of grin engineers
who have warned that feet-cluttered cities
are causing tight lips. Surplus pavement, the news
has concluded, could prop greater grinners.

My anxiety about the pavement crisis
narrows to an unbent wanderer across the street.
She perches her foot on a stair to a trolley, chairs empty.

The lightness of her step hardens my bench.
I cross the plaza, tell her that travel
by body brings the bump, bang, and rattle
of nearly perfect wheels over random cracks
in specific ground, that quiet travel resides
in the many rooms of mansions where lazy moods
await the wanderer to float in a conversation with a portrait.

Her gaze is tight with thought. I have no mansion.
I invite her to merge with my look into a museum
canvas. She steps from the stair, grins
and blushes as if I have lifted her from bathing
in a tub brimming with uncertainty. She places her hand,
stronger than her thin wrist hints, in my hold.

We leave to live in the mood of old pictures where untrampled floor waits.

We escape

pedestrians walking up and down the boulevard
as if, no matter how they change their stride,
their moods will be as fixed as a butcher's window
carved, by archaic hands, with an advertisement
for parts and poultry no longer sold.