

Mary Lou Sanelli

July Morning, Chetzemoka Park

I like to sit in the swing, the one closest to the sandbox
where toddlers play, their mothers sitting on the rim
chatting up preschools, the latest movie at *The Rose*.
As morning strolls toward noon, one will brush the sand
off her child and the others will follow suit.

I love the oneness I feel with this park,
though, today, a woman walks by and throws me
a glance that shoots a blunt arrow into my calm.
It is appropriate to say I am cut
from her life but that's another small-town poem
entirely.

If I have a day without duties, I like to lie on my back
looking up at a maze of clouds that give shape
to a puffy clan of faces I try to name.
One looks like my Uncle Pete
the morning after a poker game.
This is when I find myself

overcome by happiness, when an afternoon
stretches out before me empty as sky. When rocking
in a wooden swing and watching the crows
is more than enough work for one day.

By the gazebo, a friend mows the lawn
and waves to me because when I think of it
we've known each other a decade now
plus a few years.

This park, beach-bound and camouflaged
in cedar wraps me in its arms and laughs.
In this state of mind I resist all I know
of fall, winter, persistent parts of spring.
When sunless skies define what is real, I remind myself,
when you live in a luxury of water. Of rivers, rain,
lakes and sea. Where, if a city park could speak
it would say, *Girl, rain is the very reason*
I am as ravishing as this.

