

Boris Khristov · *Bulgaria*

THE WINDOW

I stand on tiptoe to reach the half-open window of the baths.  
The women are behind it—shaped up by the steam, beautiful.  
How I long to look at them. I wish I could crawl up the wall.  
And why aren't my friends here to lift me!

How they chase one another—like a herd  
bound home, rushing towards the setting sun . . .  
In what mould did God cast their breasts—  
I can hear them swaying from out here in the street.

A red ant is creeping up. Sometime around noon  
it will reach the view and die on the windowsill  
with eyes grown dim with delight. I stretch and  
scratch the wall, my inside burning like slaked lime.

The farthest I get in my life is the window,  
tired to death, I can hardly catch my breath . . .  
And there's no one to lend me a helping hand, and no one  
to channel water into the dry land where I gasp like a fish.

All this effort is in vain. Who could possibly help us  
to see everything—here, in heaven, or in the infinity of art.  
And why do we wonder so often who among us is the poet,  
And why do we stand on tiptoe when we look at each other?