

CHARLES SIMIC

The Elusive Something

Is it in some crack in the pavement
I passed following a tall-legged girl?
Is it in the smell of freshly baked bread
That came to meet me in the street

Among the few passing strangers
Of which I happen to be one
Hurrying off on some errand
Or doing our best to give the appearance,

Like that woman pushing a baby carriage,
Already turning the far corner.
I ran after her as if that child was me
And found myself alone with the sunset

And two old Chinese men playing checkers,
Like someone out after a long illness,
Who sees the world with his heart,
But whose heart is not in what he sees.