

# Late Summer

By Jennifer Grotz

Before the moths have even appeared  
to orbit around them, the streetlamps come on,  
a long row of them glowing uselessly  
  
along the ring of garden that circles the city center,  
where your steps count down the dulling of daylight.  
At your feet, a bee crawls in small circles like a toy unwinding.

Summer specializes in time, slows it down almost to dream.

And the noisy day goes so quiet you can hear  
the bedraggled man who visits each trash receptacle

mutter in disbelief: *Everything in the world is being thrown away!*

Summer lingers, but it's about ending. It's about how things  
redden and ripen and burst and come down. It's when

city workers cut down trees, demolishing  
one limb at a time, spilling the crumbs  
of twigs and leaves all over the tablecloth of street.

*Sunglasses!* the man softly exclaims  
while beside him blooms a large gray rose of pigeons  
huddled around a dropped piece of bread.

Jennifer Grotz, "Late Summer" from *The Needle*. Copyright © 2011 by Jennifer Grotz. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Source: *The Needle* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011)

