The Front Window at Starbucks, NYC

by Jerry Ratch

His eyes drift over the body of every woman who enters Starbucks, even though he's old enough to be their father or grandfather, still his eyes are aware of every shape passing by, refusing to let go, and die.

Maybe they're speaking Polish or Russian or some Balkan language,

and hogging the damned front table at the window, which we need

to photograph everything passing by in life, including all those bodies his eyes won't give up on, while searching the memories of inner youth.

The women are often drawn, painted, and sung about. What is it about them that we cannot resist looking at their flesh? The ripe flower of it, the full-throated, bird-like fluttering caused inside the heart when the draperies fall away?

When the silken, frail things float down like subliminal blossoms, and we gloat, flushed at the face, caught off-guard in the moment.

And that blind flash of the mind going off inside where memory begins to make up its own mind about history?