

A Way of Place

by Jill Chan

There are people walking,
not knowing where they are,
a way to peace is just that--
a place to go. They are like us,
the ones with nowhere to go,
with no place to stay
except in each place
forever decided--inexact--
like love or death--
or both--how similar they are--
how unrecognisable we are
in the face of mortality--
how we engage the world one way
and go our separate ways,
promising none of this,
only ways to comfort,
ageless and disconcerting, saying,
We go always to be gone,
apart from ourselves,
our endless echoes, the desires
of eternity gone the way
of everyday where we mine love
and stay, dissolve our faces
in dailiness--
a cup of coffee drunk
with so much bitterness, so much
we can't control.
Decide, we think,
decide to be someone
we couldn't be in ambition.
The rain is falling
as it is deciding.

We ponder on things not ours
to think about. The street open
like our beauty to be named.
In our minds, the people
are still walking,
now away from their lives toward
some place they cannot recognise,
some place like a mind or a heart
they've deserted like children,
how they are found
without themselves.
Please be careful of the way
you measure these things
in your life. How we decide too much
for too little. How we must be here.
How we end up where we shouldn't be--
untamed and unmoored,
washed up on a shore of
some place we decided
but cannot be.

