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## Aujourd'hui

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*Bill Elgersma*

In the land of *fleur de lis*  
and loonies and toonies  
I am home.  
Crown land, King's Highway, the QEW  
spill from my lips unconsciously—  
I have crossed a border in both body and mind.

A closed door creaks  
to shape words off my tongue  
like house and mouth and about.  
Lilt and inflection  
cause my daughter to smile,  
“You're talking funny.”

I am home  
but gone so long it all appears new.

OPP and QPP,  
MP's and PM's and RCMP's  
All initials so familiar. . . so forgotten.  
Hard living immigrants  
foreigners to make up a country of no nationality,  
just survival.

In clipped accents  
oblivious to feelings  
intent on principle  
they speak their mind  
they manage,  
proudly.

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Beer at 28 bucks a box  
smokes 6 bucks a pack,  
they work to enjoy living,  
live hard  
but not too long.

Returning back, green card in hand  
the border guard hassles me  
and I realize  
I only have the vocabulary  
a small wrinkle in a dusty portion of my brain.

To the door I have closed  
that shrinking wrinkle says,  
*Au revoir* and *bon chance*  
And to myself  
in the realization of what is left behind,  
*c'est dommage* but *c'est la vie*.

<i>aujourd'hui</i>	today
<i>fleur de lis</i>	Quebec flag
<i>au revoir</i>	good bye
<i>bon chance</i>	good luck
<i>c'est dommage</i>	That is too bad.
<i>c'est la vie</i>	That is life.