December 2007

Aujourd'hui

Bill Elgersma
Dordt College, bill.elgersma@dordt.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro_rege

Part of the Creative Writing Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro_rege/vol36/iss2/1

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by the University Publications at Digital Collections @ Dordt. It has been accepted for inclusion in Pro Rege by an authorized administrator of Digital Collections @ Dordt. For more information, please contact ingrid.mulder@dordt.edu.
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.
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 domage* but *c'est la vie.*

---

*aujourd'hui*      today
*fleur de lis*    Quebec flag
*au revoir*       good bye
*bon chance*      good luck
*c'est domage*   That is too bad.
*c'est la vie*   That is life.