

*Faith de Savigné*

## BY THE TIME I GET HOME

Carrying groceries home  
the park is full of people today  
Reading books on the benches  
lying on the grass  
Laid out? Maybe he's done it this time!  
Stretched out, absorbing the sun  
The way he said goodbye  
some sound asleep  
Those shaky lips  
could barely hold  
on to that kiss  
they've let go to the feeling of the afternoon  
Am I seeing too much into this?  
Having all the time in the world  
This last week he stopped  
hiding his pain  
the pain he's probably  
had all along  
a man on his back snores softly  
His shortness of breath  
takes longer now  
to recover from  
a young couple lie across each other  
in a small bed of grass  
We stopped sleeping together long ago  
a man and a woman share  
their lunch hour together  
He was ashamed  
of his body  
and didn't want  
to disturb my sleep  
they lean towards each other and laugh  
I do my best  
to hide my distress  
they look at me  
I smile, then look away



trying not to be intrusive  
He would search my face  
to see how far  
he had gone  
    I smile at everyone who walks past  
Has he second-guessed  
how I have tried  
to lessen the strain?  
    Towards the end of the park  
    people disperse  
What am I going to find  
when I open the door?  
    People move on to their destinations  
    without a qualm  
Has he done it this time?  
Did he get me  
out of the house to be private?  
To give himself enough time  
Time to finish it off  
    People stroll in without a care  
We've talked about it  
but how do you  
tell someone  
"Today will be the day"?  
    A perfect day to enjoy  
Maybe he's lying there now  
knowing that by the time  
I get home it will be done  
    another day spent knowing there will be another one  
I'd forgotten how life used to be  
    People move freely  
    happy to be alive  
I've been away a long time  
    a long time from here  
Is he waiting for me  
or has he decided he can't  
wait it out?  
This way home used to be so familiar  
but from now on  
it will all change  
This way will never be the same