

*Michael Sharkey*

## DAYS OF '98

No, you don't read Cavafy for wit:

the charge of emotion,  
the force of nostalgia,  
the horse-driven cab  
to a bed and the half-opened clothes ...

Faces like statues of gods'  
and more yielding than stone,  
and the light on young limbs.

Every body that stirred his desire  
a blow to the heart.

Words are museums of silence;  
each beautiful face a vieux jeu.

Maybe it's envy;  
I know that the chagrin is real.



## IMAGINARY COUNTRY: THE NECESSARY FAIRYLAND

Stranger things than children can invent occur in this land,  
Where some infants are discovered fully formed without a parent  
And where mothers feel no birth pains and no periods exist.

Children may be eaten here by ogres with no surnames.  
Elder-wood is also death to infants,  
And brings doom into the house.