A Walk in the Park
By Dr. Teresita J. Bunyakarte

Would you care for a walk away from the tamed air and light?
Get tons of those crazy selfies?
Skyscrapers in the background and us barefoot in the grass?
Messy?
We'll settle for a stroll in our high heels then.
Care for a riddle?
You don't mind.
Good.
What's weeping that's not shedding real tears?
Stop?
No.
Yes!
A weeping willow!
Look at how weeping willows are painting this park!
Fun snatchers!
Snatching away the fun one's having
like when one drops from the top of a fun tunnel slide
right in front of them.
They do it just by being everywhere.
Why this talk again?
I know.
But, if you would please... choose, please...it's only a game.
Picasso or Monet?
Since they're in the air---
Picasso, thanks.
That would be The Weeping Woman.
And out here are ten or so unframed Monet weeping willows!
I'm being hysterical!
Stop?
No!

See how those willow leaves cling to their branches?
Long and flowing
in
the
wind
all
the
way
down
to
the
pond
for
a
final
touchdown.

And
you're giving me---
this shawl---
as a birth---day, goodbye gift---
because your frail body's getting frailer,
because you're leaving me behind,
because you're going to a new place.
Where next to beyond is an infinity of nothingness!
Right.
As if I'd been there already.
Which, you say, is a better place.
A better place...
Forgive me...
All along, it had been me.
Fractured.
Standing in front of...by...
(never mind this positioning logic!)
an unruffled pond.
But this...this slow-viewing,
the kind we did back in there...
is making me see it, my dear twin little sister---
and seeing is what is happening now,
this fathoming out...
finally, from here, is quieting...

You're right.
It's high time we went home.
There's packing up to do for our 36th birthday trip!
The bucket list.
Visit to a museum.
Done!
Off we go to Grandma's house.
Tomorrow.
Right, tomorrow...

Bio-data:
Dr. Teresita Juan Bunyakarte has been a lecturer in the Institute for English Language Education at Assumption University of Thailand since 1985. She holds a B.S.E. in English (Cum Laude) from the Philippine Normal College (now Philippine Normal University), an M.A. in English Literature from Chulalongkorn University and a Ph.D. in English as an International Language (international program) also from Chulalongkorn University. Her interests include English literature, ESP, course development, reading instruction, and team-based learning.