Laundromat Near the Corner of Passage Alexandrine

Here’s to centuries of laundromats
and cigarettes, boundless fluorescence
and the coin slot, time and heat, clean towels
for all, the warmth of euros as they descend,
detergent named for animals or angels.
It’s minus one, it’s six pm and the moon
is already busy. Here, everything folds
after it spins, according to the politesse
of strangers. The room is full of greetings.
Water runs all over our clothes as though
it had always meant to do so.

It’s time to turn and let the colours be.
They will never stay sharp, not even
in moonlight, as fibres fray and fall till
they can no further. This is no longer
important, although we have nowhere
to go that’s changed from this morning.
It was sunnier then, of course, but
what metamorphosis could we accept
so late in the moment when we have
nowhere else to go in our centuries,
our waters, or our winters that are shiny
in each uncertainty.

Jill Jones