

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