There are too many waterfalls here; the crowded streams hurry too rapidly down to the sea, and the pressure of so many clouds on the mountaintops makes them spill over the sides in soft slow-motion, turning to waterfalls under our very eyes.

—For if those streaks, those mile-long, shiny, tearstains, aren’t waterfalls yet, in a quick age or so, as ages go here, they probably will be.

But if the streams and clouds keep travelling, travelling, the mountains look like the hulls of capsized ships, slime-hung and barnacled.

Think of the long trip home.
Where should we be today?
Is it right to be watching strangers in a play in this strangest of theatres?
What childishness is it that while there’s a breath of life in our bodies, we are determined to rush to see the sun the other way around?
The tiniest green hummingbird in the world?
To stare at some inexplicable old stonework, inexplicable and impenetrable, at any view, instantly seen and always, always delightful?

But surely it would have been a pity not to have seen the trees along this road, really exaggerated in their beauty, not to have seen them gesturing

like noble pantomimists, robed in pink.
—Not to have had to stop for gas and heard
the sad, two-noted, wooden tune
of disparate wooden clogs
carelessly clacking over
a grease-stained filling-station floor.
(In another country the clogs would all be tested.
Each pair there would have identical pitch.)
—A pity not to have heard
the other, less primitive music of the fat brown bird
who sings above the broken gasoline pump
in a bamboo church of Jesuit baroque:
three towers, five silver crosses.
—Yes, a pity not to have pondered,
blurr’dly and inconclusively,
on what connection can exist for centuries
between the crudest wooden footwear
and, careful and finicky,
the whittled fantasies of wooden cages.
—Never to have studied history in
the weak calligraphy of songbirds’ cages.
—And never to have had to listen to rain
so much like politicians’ speeches:
two hours of unrelenting oratory
and then a sudden golden silence
in which the traveller takes a notebook, writes:

"Is it lack of imagination that makes us come
to imagined places, not just stay at home?
Or could Pascal have been not entirely right
about just sitting quietly in one’s room?

Continent, city, country, society:
the choice is never wide and never free.
And here, or there . . . No. Should we have stayed at home,
wherever that may be?"

Squatter'

On the unbreathing they play, a specklike
alone, but near a spec
The sun’s suspended
blinks casually, and the
gigantic waves of light
A dancing yellow spot
attends them. Clouds

a storm piles up behind
The children play at their
The ground is hard; the
one of their father’s to
a mattock with a broken
the two of them can see.
It drops and clangs. The

weak flashes of inquiry
direct as is the puppy’s
But to their little, sol

unwarrantable ark,
apparently the rain’s rest
consists of echolalia,
and Mother’s voice, ugly
keeps calling to them:

Children, the threshold
has slid beneath your
wet and beguiled, you
the mansions you may come
out of a bigger house than
whose lawfulness endured.
Its soggy documents retain
your rights in rooms of f