

Some nights he'd watch hockey and so she'd rock
 with a novel or her Valéry and go to France
 where she and several guests of the gay prince
 picnic and play at croquet on the chateau grounds.
 Lace and ribbons are all the fashion rage
 and ladies in chiffon and high coiffures
 fan their bright bosoms like birds of song.
 And there are men with names like pink flowers
 or instruments of sound in silk stockings
 and plump satin breeches to knee length who seem fond
 of dabbing their rouged lips with handkerchiefs
 they keep in their coat sleeves for such occasions
 while all around their wigs hum yellow honeybees
 drawn to their powders and colognes and toiletries.
 And she is out among them and her hand is kissed
 by gentlemen of rank and her opinion sought
 on Couperin and Molière and Poussin —
 all high etiquette and courtly talk.
 Out in the garden, she hears the gardener sing,
 between hedgerows of juniper and yew,
O Canada, our home and native land. He moves
 by evening light through his green diocese,
 smelling of dung and mulch and growing things,
 heartsick for that hard country of his youth.
 Some nights he'd take her to his room upstairs
 and speak in that far dialect she loved
 of ice and earth and qualities of air —
 his True North, strong and free, *O Canada;*
 and then he'd make fine body love to her.
 Next morning she'd make omelettes and he'd thumb
 the newspaper for word of Guy Lafleur
 or Marcel Dionne. And she'd be pleased because
 that was the style of the country he'd come from.

Thomas Lynch
 THOMAS LYNCH

O CANADA

