DEIRDRE DWYER

The Two-Sided City
—for Anna

A city of futons in every window
on sunny days,
city of umbrellas when it rains—

in this place I think of you,
five months old in Nova Scotia
while I’m in Kanamachi, town of money
where the cherry trees blossomed last week
and fall to the sidewalk now
like a rain of pink confetti
or like a snow
the sunset turns colours.

I used to sit with you
in the rocking chair,
you, a newborn
tucked inside my old arms.

So many oceans between us,
so many dark-haired people here—
when you slept in my arms
I’d softly touch your hair
that’s almost auburn in the true light
that I've already forgotten
for the approaching rainy season,
the humid weather and typhoons.
When I see you again
will you be able to ask me
where I have been?

17 April 1987
Kanamachi, Tokyo