

The plane trees

by [Luci Shaw](#) in the [May 20, 2020](#) issue

*River Seine, 2006*

So, you decide *this* is worth  
writing about, or painting—  
the shapes of the branches on  
the trees, how the afternoon sun  
gleams on the mottled trunks,  
how their reflections echo in the river.

You cannot change the image;  
it has been there for centuries.  
All you can do is move your own  
body, shifting the angle here and there,  
back and forth, so that you  
see the thing differently,  
until you find a satisfaction.

Is this how we solve  
the enigmas of living? Things are  
what they are and God is  
who God is, unchangeable.  
To satisfy our souls it is we  
who must move, or be moved,  
within the contours of grace.  
Until. Until a fresh composition  
in space, where light will  
beautify our faces enough to  
establish us in a fresh, particular  
space in the creation.