


## REFLECTION<sup>1</sup>

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I am at the University, by the fountain.  
I'm waiting for bus 381. It's raining; I'm cold and hungry.  
In a gray puddle, I see the building under renovation.  
Geography. Letters. Foreign Languages. Mathematics.  
Tall windows, U-shaped arches.  
U from institution, from culture, from study.  
At the evening seminar the power went out.  
So what? We switch to cave mode 2.0,  
the firefly version. We translate fragments  
by the light of our phones. Anne of Green Gables.  
To Sir, with Love. Butterfly's Tongue.  
The Ministry of Pain. We found the cheeks  
once traced by tears. We saw how chalk  
would snap against the board.  
The marker is vintage; we write directly on the screen  
with the finger, with the nerve, with the fury—  
Sometimes, great things happen  
in small dark spaces.

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## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTOR

MONICA MANOLACHI is a Lecturer of English and Spanish at the University of Bucharest. *Performative Identities in Contemporary Caribbean British Poetry* (2017) is part of her work as a literary critic. She co-edited *Cultural Representations of Food and Drinks in World Literature* (2025) with Lorena Mihăeş. Her main research interests are Caribbean literature and culture, translation studies, and cultural studies. She has published many articles about how poetry functions as a cultural litmus paper and about contemporary Romanian prose in translation. She is also a bilingual poet, editor and literary translator. *Urban Heartbeats* (2025), *Journeys in Europe* (2022) and *Brasília* (2018) are collaborative poetry collections published together with Scottish poet Neil Leadbeater.

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