

22 September 2018

## Clouds

I'd have to be really quick  
to describe clouds -  
a split second's enough  
for them to start being something else.

Their trademark:  
they don't repeat a single  
shape, shade, pose, arrangement.

Unburdened by memory of any kind,  
they float easily over the facts.

What on earth could they bear witness to?  
They scatter whenever something happens.

Compared to clouds,  
life rests on solid ground,  
practically permanent, almost eternal.

Next to clouds  
even a stone seems like a brother,  
someone you can trust,  
while they're just distant, flighty cousins.

Let people exist if they want,  
and then die, one after another:  
clouds simply don't care  
what they're up to  
down there.

And so their haughty fleet  
cruises smoothly over your whole life  
and mine, still incomplete.

They aren't obliged to vanish when we're gone.  
They don't have to be seen while sailing on.

- Wislawa Szymborska