

BUT IT DOES NOT LOOK LIKE RAIN

S A L C E T R A N O

From my fourth floor window,
early morning, I see the tar paper roof
of the elevated station, half a block away.
Beneath a canvas tarp, perched atop
the heads of the rush hour crowd,
a homeless couple silently sleeps.

They've caught my voyeur's eye before,
scaling wrought iron fence by moonlight,
last of cops and porters gone,
unloading, settling in for the night.
The young man is gaunt and stubbled,
with mad wolf eyes, the girl dim-witted

but benign, in need of protection.
It's all they seem to have, this patch,
Eden on the half shell, end of the line.
The girl pushes the tarp aside,
moved by a belly of midnight beer,
and tiptoes down the gentle pepply slope.

Oblivious of the bustle, she daintily
drops soiled red shorts and, eyes glazed,
squatting like a diver, pees.
The snaking stream briefly puddles
at the sloped roof's edge, then begins
to drip, drip, drip before the eyes

of the rushers platform-packed below.
A bow-tie man, straddling attache,
furrows his brow and extends a hand.
Catching a drop, he studies his palm
a moment, tweaks glasses, cranes neck.
Puzzled, he searches a cloudless sky.