

*People Who Forget to Tie Their Shoes*

I wouldn't call it sadness, but the way  
they look with their laces flapping  
like the outstretched arms of someone  
running, I couldn't say they're content.  
They need thinking about. They need reminding.

In their houses at night, the windows  
shrink to the size of portholes. At times  
they peer into their darkened yards  
and whisper, This is strictly business.  
The hours pass into something like knowledge.

These people tremble, search for  
the breathtaking, make plans to change  
their lives. Nothing feels incidental.  
They wish they knew a dozen foreign  
languages, a way to remember what

they didn't think to write down. While  
everyone else is feeling cheated, they try  
to retrace their steps to the place  
where they last held their wallet, not  
believing it was stolen.

Christine Sneed, appeared in *Pleiades*, Vol. 23, #2, 2003