

## WISŁAWA SZYMBORSKA

1923-2012



### In Fact Every Poem (Właściwie każdy wiersz)

In fact every poem  
might be called “Moment.”

One phrase is enough  
in the present tense,  
5 the past and even future;

it's enough so that anything  
borne on words  
begins to rustle, sparkle,  
flutter, float,  
10 while seeming  
to stay changeless  
but with a shifting shadow;

it's enough that there is talk  
of someone next to someone  
15 or someone next to something;

about Sally who has a kitty  
or no longer has a kitty;

or about other Sallys  
kitties or not kitties  
20 from other primers  
ruffled by the wind;

it's enough if within eyeshot  
an author places temporary hills  
and makeshift valleys;  
25 if on this occasion  
he hints at a heaven

apparently firm and enduring;

if there appears beneath a writing hand

at least one thing

30 that is called someone's;

if in black on white,

at least in thought,

for some serious or silly reason,

question marks are placed,

35 and if in response,

a colon:

—Translated from the Polish by Clare Cavanagh and Stanisław Barańczak

2005/2015



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