

Lo Siento . . . I'm Remembering

Lo siento, I guess
I'm sorry for . . .
bitter coffee warm with cream
laying on my tongue, an aftertaste
of late nights and early mornings,
half-remembered conversations,
as I sit at the desk in my hotel room,
Tacoma, its downtown offices,
orderly rows of trees
red with fall color before me, early morning haze
moving in over the hills, ready to battle
the sun, dark and light.

I'm remembering yesterday's class discussion:
Rome as republic, a fragile democracy
blasted by expansionist military policies,
the greed of generals, the rise of cities,
people turned
to harsh entertainments, the floor
of the Coliseum bloody from mock battles,
animals and humans to the death.

Rome was yesterday's class discussion.
We have no such dark entertainments.
Our generals are doves.
We do not war unreasonably.
Modern gases do not enflame the oracle.
Like Rome, we are invincible.
Lo siento. I'm remembering my books
as I read the headlines.