

## Charles Simic

### *Daughters of Memory*

There were three of them, always three,  
Sunbathing side by side. The sound of waves  
And children's voices so soothing  
It was hard to stay awake with eyes closed.

When I opened mine, the sun was setting.  
The three friends knelt in the sand  
Taking turns to peek into a mirror  
And comb their hair with the same comb.

Months later, I happened to see two of them  
Running in the rain after school  
Ducking into a doorway with a pack of cigarettes  
And a glance at me in my new uniform.

In the end, there was just one left,  
Looking even more beautiful and mysterious  
Carrying a vial of morphine late one night  
Past a row of beds, one of which was mine.