

Steven Sher

Spitball

In 9th grade French, Monsieur Chaplain
would turn his back to our class

those waning moments before lunch
to scratch our homework on the board.

Some boys tossed spitballs from the rear.
A couple stuck to his sports jacket.

Most landed, weighted, on the floor.
A stray bounced off the chalkboard.

One lucky shot struck the back of his head,
but we desisted from this insolence

as he turned to face the class,
our befuddled and benign Chaplain,

who absorbed the blows without a word
then turned his back on us again.

Steven Sher is a Brooklyn, NY native living in Jerusalem. He is the author of 14 books including, most recently, *The House of Washing Hands* (Pecan Grove Press, 2014) and *Grazing on Stars: Selected Poems* (Presa Press, 2012). For more than 35 years, he has lectured on writing and literature, led numerous workshops and taught at a variety of universities. More information is available at stevensher.net.