

Celine

Lawrence Pettener

Her name was Celine, and we met outside the Pompidou.
She was with some friends, but we spent the day in cafés,
talking about Life as we imagined it (I was nineteen
and she was two years younger). She took me

home to her mother's flat, where we talked in her room –
I longed for another sort of intercourse. I told her
all about my guru Sri Rajneesh's methods
of arousing kundalini energy, naked massage,

eye-gazing exercises and a whole lot more –
I thought it was all hip to talk about, but she told me:
I don't like sects. I was crushed for the rest of my teens.
Next day, in our favourite café near Opera, I probed

a little, and she told me: Sex? Oh no, I love eet!
I burst out laughing as her voice rose
on that final word, and she touched me
on the arm, laughing too. But apart

from a farewell hug, there would be no more touching.