

Fallen Stars

A black sky
Shot through with light
Heat fading from the sands
Glass craters blasted
By fallen stars
A noise like the end of the world
She says
Incandescent memories
Written in air and fading
Only the grip of that fist
Around the heart
Remains
Photographs taken from the air
A thousand dreams of arc-light
The motion of bodies like toys
All the same
Digital movies step in for the spirit
The solid thing of faith
As somewhere it rains
The kiss of hot, thirsty earth
Of purity
Liberation through shackles
Tears on skin
The sick contamination
Of those forgotten
Those that forget and are undone
The dreams of
Everything the same
And safe
And right
And just
Fantasies played out on
The dusty highways to nowhere
And within
The flowers of concrete compounds
Closed in on themselves
The radiation of data packets
And telephone conversations
Spill entropically
From the walls
Waiting like
Strange hidden fruits
The green promise of the desert
Bitter suck of juices
That rip stomachs apart

They watched it fall
Spewing fire and lightening

From a torn unreal sky
Pollarded trees raising
Supplicating arms
That were ignored
Cheap painted fantasies
Blistering long lines of cars
Petrol-reeking nights
Of television, life leaking out
Across stone-clad exteriors
Castle walls hiding a cement front yard
And a second-hand motor
Radio 1 across the thunderstorm
Back facing back
Across scrubland and crazy paving
A wreckage of allotments
Plaster statues
Of gypsy caravans
And Dutch boys, and dogs
The lines of kitchen lights
The afterglow of television
Carved across the hand of God
Ill-fitted carpets
Piled four deep
Shoes lost down the sides
And eyes raised, transfixed
By the blot of star core
Burning a hole in the sky
A thunderball over Dagenham
And telephone lines crackling
In panic
As it fell,
Seen from the District Line
Carving a path towards
The tumescent radiation of the west
Stars in another desert

One by one the lights of lost children
Fading
Sirius, Andromeda, Orion
The dreams of pilots
And the women left behind
Hanging on promises
Porcelain words of future actions
It was over anyway
Her love
Sacrificed to another mother's word
A nothing to be shattered
Like the crystal sky in moonlight
The eyes that break wings
And cripple limbs

Where once I saw angels
The Pole Star, or satellites
These things have gone
Drowned in the sodium glow
Of comfort
The insular warmth
Of our desperate night-times
Slaked in wealth
And we retreat one by one
To the places written by our ancestors
And one by one
Watch the stars fall

Jethro Perkins, Canning Town, 24/04/06