

Red Sun

Three midday ghosts
Smiling shyly, then slyly, shoes slipped off
And feet shattering the water
Reflection flashed across skin
Recognised, one looks back
And stretches out her arm towards me
Hair floating upward
Pleading
“Come play with us”
All skin dissolved, nothing but
Warm sunshine and cool water

Standing by the shore, the sidhe call
Glass ships across oceans
A night that lasts a thousand years
Desires undone
By fairy hands, the camera spins
The bodies touch
And skin holds out
All the same words unsaid

The world I walk in, a dead man
Hollowed out, no voice
A ghost as much as her hand
Remembered reaching out
Dust whipped in hot winds
Carrier bags and newspapers
Dancing madly
Blades slashed across the a sun
Howling against the call to prayer
The calling down,
Dreams monitored on ECG and
Blood on fire, a mirage
Television reports of riots,
A refugee made mayor in East London
As northern towns burn
Panic buttons hit
Fingers of medicine traced through skulls
Growing faint
Spirits risen like cigarette smoke
From still bodies, smiles left on rigid skin.

The screeching of the telephone,
The poisoned tongue

A white woman begs them not to do it
“Because she's not Asian, she's Indian”
But they do it anyway,
The glittering rain of glass
Paint blistering,
Plastic toys buckle
Licked by hot tongues
Cloth seams dangling blazing tails
A lesion of pain
Faces clouded, that will never smile
Redeye, the strobe of the camera flash,
Hate, this heat

Picking up the pieces,
The broken teeth of shop fronts
Restaurant chairs, looted goods
The wailing women behind closed doors,
Wondering why
Footage of bodies piled in storerooms
Revenge for revenge attacks upon
Some other Mothers' sons
Daughters cold with rage,
Withdrawn into hearsay
Whispered prejudice
All the years of love drawn out
Like a sting

“Come play with us”
The red fist of sun beating down
A rage
That should dissolve,
But doesn't
Coloured silks and laughter,
Everything lost - water slipping through cupped hands -
Comes back,
A hand held out, much as I cannot reach it,
Yet
Waiting against the fury
For as long as it will take

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