

Alan Gillis

**SOMEBODY,
SOMEWHERE**



Gallery Books

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To Belfast

May your bulletproof knickers drop like rain
and your church-spires attain a higher state of grace.
My lily-of-the-valley, the time is at hand
to ring your bells and uproot your cellulose stem.
I bought hardware, software, and binoculars to trace
your ways of taking the eyes from my head.

And none of it worked. We've been coming to a head
for too long; aircraft prick the veins of your rain-
bow as they shoot you in soft focus to trace
the tramlines of your cellulite skin. But with the grace
of a diva on a crackling screen, you never stem
to their cameras, you're forever getting out of hand.

Once in school, on a greaseproof page, we had to trace
the busts and booms of your body, and I was ashamed to hand
mine in because it lacked what Da called grace.
And I wish I was the centre of a rain-
drop that's falling on your head, the key to your hand-
cuffs, the drug that could re-conjugate your head.

For Belfast, if you'd be a Hollywood film, then I'd be Grace
Kelly on my way to Monaco, to pluck the stem
of a maybell with its rows of empty shells, its head
of one hundred blinded eyes. I would finger your trace
in that other city's face, and bite its free hand
as it fed me, or tried to soothe the stinging of your rain.

Traffic Flow

Letters from Vow and Moneydig are sent to Baltic Avenue,
while from Friendly Row parcels are sent to Drumnakilly
and to Tempo. From Whitehead, past Black Head, and up
to Portmuck, Byron steers his bright red van, dreaming of
Sara in Economy Place, whose handheld has just gone dead.
Down on Cypress Avenue, Katie from Downhill texts Conrad,
lingering in Joy's Entry, listening to *Here Comes the Night*.
She keys 'Sorry but I had 2' while the busker, Sharon, thinks
of phoning home to Gortnagallon. On Dandy Street somebody's
Da says to somebody's Ma: 'Come on to fuck'. It's good to talk.
Moneyglass fills with disillusion. Everybody scampering under
the same weather, crossing lines, never coming together.

Traffic Jam

All along the Lagan was flowing
and the money passed by outstretched hands.
Refugees and a cleavage were blown up on bill-
boards for traffic, which was coming to a head,
when I realized I hadn't turned you on
again. The lipsticked sky smoked contraband
cloud, blurring its tattoo of satellite links,
as I fingered your number into the digital skirl
that threads these streets, full of bodies on the brink
of being found. But your number was dead.

Litter

In one fluent move, I let the crisp bag
fall and licked my salty greased fingers,
then adjusted my balls and watched the empty
packet catch a current, crashing into the kerb,
skipping skyward over fumes of snaking traffic.
Until that evening, fingering peanuts in my dark
blue bowl, with nothing on tv, I never heard
the rustle among the shopping mall's debris,
I never saw the plastics refusing to corrode
among the dockside seaweed, and I lay there,
coiled against the growls of traffic moaning,
the salt-rasped scouring of an outrageous sea.

Under the Weather

The rain? Don't talk to me about the rain.
A slash of sequins, turning to a drilled
downpour of teeth, gnawing the windowpane,
flushing the roof, gaping the spectrum again.
And we walk the waterbulbs, watching rilled
gutterstreams upsplurge, jetsprouting the drain,
our lagoon-heads pealing into thunder.
Sometime soon, we must talk about the thunder.

Progress

They say that for years Belfast was backwards
and it's great now to see some progress.
So I guess we can look forward to taking boxes
from the earth. I guess that ambulances
will leave the dying back amidst the rubble
to be explosively healed. Given time,
one hundred thousand particles of glass
will create impossible patterns in the air
before coalescing into the clarity
of a window. Through which, a reassembled head
will look out and admire the shy young man
taking his bomb from the building and driving home.