

The Derelict

Nineteen sixty four, in tumbly streeeted Neath,
A chill wet spring night,
With baleful yellow light.
A chip wrapper danced by the clutching wind,
To celebrate some local gourmet's feast.
Horizontal rain, sweeping from the east.
Now stirs the swirling wind a tattered bundle,
That lurches, one hand upon the polestone
Of Madame Hussie's flaking fashion shop,
With cracked and missing letters at the top.
Her leering window models crane their necks
And watch him pass,
A shuffling, shivering mass.
His dogend stooping thwarted by rain,
No storage in his saturated coat,
No "Gutter Blend" to burn his trembling throat,
No "Kerbstone Twist" to meet his shaking match,
To his grumbling ribs is clutched his precious flagon,
Past "Dai Short-Weight's" coal encrusted wagon.
Past Aramassi's heaving cafe window
Easter eggs on sale, amid last Christmas tinsel,
In May,
With chocolate bribes for Mothers day.
Suddenly looming, twelve foot tall,
A blue-black policeman, with winking lantern buttons,
That make the bundle blink and stare,
His few emotions suddenly laid bare.
Fear in his cider eyes,
Rebellion in his forty proof spirit marrow,
The policeman's form is wide,
The street is narrow.
A firm grasp on a thin reluctant elbow,
His unasked bed awaits him, hard and dry,
There for the grace of who? Go I.