

Face It

SAMPLE

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

Enchant / Extinguish

SAMPLER

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Face It

SAMPLE

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SLIP INTO HACKNEY

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Slip into Hackney



Slip into Hackney, over your head.
Pass under, between, beside, beyond and through.

You've made a choice to trust your weight to
Hackney's streets and surfaces

so let the place take you.



Part the people crowding the thoroughfare,
There's been an infinity.

Ease apart the assemblage of the city.
Set it aside.

The clay gouged out and shuttered into moulds,
and baked and stacked and turned to rooms for people
can be returned to earth.

The earth dug out for wires and lines and drains,
restrained and changed and mixed with other substances,
can be restored and simplified, undone.



The roads can be unmade again.
The fields can be undug again.
The people lie unmarked and unrecalled.



Wander the woodland far before
a place you know the name for.

Wander the woodland somewhere near
a marsh, a stream, the sound of geese.

Become another, other, any living thing.



There's time for you.

Allow yourself

those long uncounted centuries
of rest.



This is the physical world
that built you and birthed you,
wrapped you in substance,
set you in life.

It's with you to the end.

But be aware.



The air is full of energy.
The planet's full of energy.
You can't escape – there's heat inside
the centre of your bones, and
somewhere out in time there's
movement
agile and alive.
It calls for you.



Come back now.
Come back to now.
Hackney is urgent, needing you here.



This is the truth

There really was a weary pair of guards, who may have been in wines and beers or may have been in household goods, and also Mr Crouch who with a friend or on his own said simply or simply didn't say *I bet those twats won't see*, who did or didn't go there through the wind because he thought he recognised a mate. The lights of evening *Kwikshop* shone through glass, on rain and coats and cars and chasing through the gloom our man here certainly got jumped (whether Dilan showed the right ID or not, whoever had him by whichever arms and legs). It's true they dragged him in by Aisle 1, after the bottle fell or didn't from his coat, after his flailing fist hit Duncan in the mouth, which may have bled or may have merely bruised, and the police came after someone (Kenny?) called. I can confirm that things were said, that fighting could have finished with a kicking in the balls, or maybe when he figured out the odds, and cameras caught it all although the tape – before it disappeared at least – was clearly blank. And it's gospel: after everyone was gone a weary cleaner swept up broken glass, or it was kicked along by several strangers' feet, into the dark.

Made and made over

every surface

made and made over

Victorians

dragging whole neighbourhoods out of fields

philanthropists

heaping poverty in dense blocks

no homes for heroes in these caustic streets

cemeteries of addresses

shaded on black maps

a raw wind billowing concrete

down staircases, into yards

and suddenly you at 8, pausing skinny as a whippet

compass point scratching your name

fleet-footing it

through 60s towers and 70s blank walls

through decades of pvc and chrome

slipping

into a mirrored millennium

every surface

made and made over

your scuffs and scratches

veiled now

under deeper cuts and darker crimes

your feet

that kept the pavements turning, kept

gravity in place

now trod and trod away

noiseless

into a brave new

reckless

shiny sold-out world

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Hackney Brook

What did they do with our
Hackney Brook? Tidied it away.

They cased it in concrete and
made it serve sewers. They filled in
the hoofprints of cattle in mud.

What will they do with our
wisdom? Chase it all away.

To fit us for working
glib and quiescent, neat inside
certainties, perjured and priced.

Marshall the cowshit and gather
your inarticulate soul.

They are pulling the leaves
off the trees in Parliament
rather than let them fall.