

Street

*They go on about us homeless
the ones on the street – but they live
where we don't meet ...*

Here by Tesco's in the Stroud Green Road
or under the bridge at Finsbury Park
huddling and propping up
their cardboard pleas - pleas for help
some *change* - some food – a look
- *anything* please -
and you and I

walk past

troubled as we disconnect
and later reflect - in warm kitchens
– where we online petitions
rant our thoughts and our passions
write our poems into the night
so we can sleep easy
and bask in the Likes
of FaceBook approval
and yet

and yet

we walk past

in the street remembering with relief
the food banks in churches –
past the hoodie that lurches
huddled in arches and doorways
past newspaper bedding the piss
and graffiti on walls that scream.

The grey girl by London Bridge
is still a teen she hugs and rocks herself
in tears that stream her scarred'n acne'd face
that track her mutilated arms

and we walk past

feeling her pain the mutual shame

and we walk past

her rocking – and I think of stopping
of crouching down – and then what?
a coin or two doesn't do – as she rocks
and rocks

*London is out pricing us forcing us outsourcing us - go home?
We have no homes: we're dossers tossers losers unlicensed squatters
we're saddoes baddoes weirdoes -
as the frost claims us chill blames us wind claws us
and the rest of you ignores us: our eyes
blank 'n dull - but not so dull
we can't miss who's eyein' us
who's dealing freewheeling who's reeling -
- can't miss who's gonna claim our patch
beneath the spray painted child in tears
tears of defeat tears of exhaustion
un-quiet posters ripped in protest in sickly neon
as Amy looks on – well out of it now –
she kicked it at twenty seven – and some of us
won't reach that – and then – what?*

The girl's still rocking
her tears a stream her pock-
marked face a silent scream -
as we *walk past*
don't stop
as we walk past
don't stop.

