

The World at Dusk

Along the lanes, in the emerging day,
a body in the world is a body
on an errand. The aching calf
knows the passage of time.

Injury once left me long
on the window's warmer side, gazing
at the snow blown through
the poplars' leafless branches.

All day, each day, the world was at dusk,
the change of light incidental.
When at last I walked to the postbox, afternoon
was everywhere. I had decades to live.

Carrie Etter
from *The Tethers*
Seren Books, 2009
www.serenbooks.com



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Berg

After the Larsen breakout of ninety-five,
when a mound the size of Rutland calved with a howl
into the Amundsen sea, and bergy bits and growlers
surrounded Cape Longing, we were on standby.

Glaciologists from Colorado to London
argued over fracture mechanics and bed forms.
Every satellite map looked like a storm
breaking. We put a watch on the ice tongue.

Now everything mattered; melt water ponding,
the crystallography of frazil ice, the hole in the ozone layer
the thermodynamics of polar-bear hair.
We sandbagged East Anglia, Holland.

They came like brides, majestic over Barking Reach,
queued to check-in at the Barrier, their tabular tops
reflecting weak sun, waltzed towards Wapping
and Wandsworth, cold and hooded, each one

like an inmate from some asylum holding the flowered
hem of her ancient slip too high up her pale thighs,
a thousand mile stare in her eyes,
saving the last dance for the Post Office Tower.

Hilary Menos
from *Berg*
Seren Books, 2009
www.serenbooks.com



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Blinkers

After rain: the dull romance of waiting.
With luck the sun breaks through,
a city of glass slides free of stone
and the road itself becomes a mirror -

each walker a miracle of foot
upon counterfeit river.
So many faces are made young
in this uplift, made beautiful.

I shade my eyes from below,
and, as if gesture is recondite cue,
my bus rounds the corner.
Time enough to pat my pockets

for an unleavened wallet.
The doors part, the driver regards me
as a squire would from his horse -
raises his beanie, invites me to board.

Patrick Brandon
from *A Republic of Linen*
Bloodaxe 2009
www.bloodaxebooks.com



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Twenty Below Zero

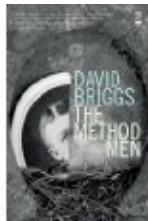
After reaching the peninsula
we received a silver bullet,
edges flecked with powder, as a gift.

Steam from Turkish coffee
syruped through our window
in the marbled night.

Wrapped in bear pelts we huddled
on the stone floor, turning it over
in our hands, memorising duels

we had fought on our way out to the sea.

David Briggs
from *The Method Men*
Salt Publishing 2010
www.saltpublishing.com



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