

Shades of Gray

A siren prompts bystanders on their way.
Outside, blue lights blink intermittently.
If questioned, I'll have nothing much to say-
instead, I close the curtains, watch t.v.

and trawl the channels: oily gameshow hosts;
'One hundred greatest war-fils (Vietnam)';
transvestites maul guitars; fat ladies roast
a duckling, whilst discoursing about jam.

Graffiti's all that grows here now – though fag's
end sprout amongst discarded cans.
Bengali mums limp homeward, Tesco bags
suspended by their sides like giant hands.

Just down this street some tragedy unwinds
(I heard a scream drowned-out by drunken jeers).
As paramedics check for vital signs,
two girls flounce past with cell phones to their ears.

Awareness bristles through me, like a knife,
of awkward truths I might reflect upon:
you only get the one chance in this life
and, once it's finished, all you were is gone.

My neighbour's stereo is much too loud
(he says he just forgets it!) I'll complain.
The weatherman gives frost with scattered cloud,
some sunny spells and just a threat of rain.

Kevin Saving