

Tracy Patrick (HNC) Reid Kerr College

Broomlands Street, Paisley

Last night someone kicked in the front door. Today there is only a ragged tooth of wood. BASTARDS — this is what we are; it says so on the walls in black marker. From my third floor window, I observe the dogshit yard: a mildewed mattress, polystyrene from the takeaway, empty bottles of Buckfast. The neighbours play techno. Their dog howls; we are both prisoners. Though it's not all bad. At night Cassiopeia zig-zags across the sky and I light candles, burn lavender oil, recite poems like charms and, beneath the black wing of the moon, the screams outside shrink back. But when the sun opens his huge eye, I insist he take a broom, sweep the whole lot up, and put it in a box marked Return to Sender.