

I

Truant

That's him. Under the orange sunset swing,  
Quick stepping down the old Grove Road,  
Breathing out blue-smoked glamour,  
A haze above the cracked pavement slab.  
'Click-clack', he snaps out a hand to  
The Pinstriped Suit,  
No Pockets.  
And with a pivot and a tap, the lovers' free hands flip  
Two pennies into the rented hat. With that  
A yellow bulb flicks, a bill floats.  
He winks, stamps,  
Paid.  
Clap.

In the spotlight of 112 Portobello Road  
The top of tower blocks huddle in the skyline.  
He stitches that slit in the sky: a knife gash.  
Tenements. Spittle.  
Broken burning cigarettes crumble,  
Except the kiss of a fag-end, after sloshing his wet whistle.  
With the cattle class he trots home  
To the beats of new London.  
Twisted noise and bitter rhythm  
In the big schools  
On the bigger estates  
He glances in. They're twizzling biros, whistling low.  
'Fare ye well on the welfare!'  
Because it's tuppence for your philosophy  
And tuppence for your dreams.  
The state will hand them sickly sweets.

He is,  
A modern love  
Of the post-generation generation.  
In the city, limits rule the young  
Gasping lungs.  
But it's their torn paper, their filters  
That he drops in puddles,  
And he's drifting, in what might have been.