

# THE QUARRY

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The Citadel

## THE TOWER

The behemoth towers

A fractured edge of the city

Forged in its rows of sightless eyes

And as darkness smears the day

An elevator grinds and rumbles

Fills its belly with humanity

Radios and televisions fuse

In a babbled soundtrack

With the crackle and spit of pans

That dance and leap in ritual

Above the fetor and clabber

Of yellowing stoves

Somewhere a baby cries

Dogs bark

A plane whines overhead

Whilst the night deepens

The mortals within

Fortify against the incubus of the dark

And when heavy muses surface

The dreamless and the empty

Fill in a chimera of icons.

### UNIT 3

There is one within who sits

A reluctant companion to the night

Circled by cobras of smoke and regret

She rolls another cigarette

Dwells on her creaseless face

Her adamant and tight body

Plundered by the years

The hands of time dragging

Straining and stretching her

Into another shape

She no longer reads time

In the faces of people or of clocks  
For time is no longer on her side

She waits for him  
He who is plunging his memory  
Into a bracing splash of the past  
Whetting dry frustration  
With the potent promises of youth.

#### UNIT 8

He lies  
Bible pyjamaed close  
Dreaming of knock-knocking  
Peddling his brand of religion  
On glossy pamphlets printed in China  
Converting his way to paradise  
While Armageddon looms

She summons him now  
Through the screened door  
And the deep bee-drone

Of a distant lawnmower  
Provides background harmony  
As her weeping hair  
Sullies his body

With wanting and pain

His sin sputters and spills

Into the yielding mattress

That holds him tenderly

Under a heavy crucifix

Rigid against the peeling wall

While in the kitchen

The obscene dishes nag to be washed.

#### UNIT 4

She drifts

Creamy and bubbled

In his party-hatted

Hip hip hooray love

He suspends her

Dulls her senses in fairy-floss solace

Pads the enormity of hundreds and thousands

In soft white bread

Still she yearns for the cut and slice of life

The ache that scratches pen to paper

As words come serrated and sharp

Stained with reality

In the slumber before dawn  
She dreams him away  
Before sweet-toothed and longing  
She calls for him  
To float once again  
A lounging marshmallow  
On the hot chocolate of his love.

### UNIT 13

A shrine of burnished trophies  
And effigies suspended in frames and time  
Conjure a haunting apparition of her daughter  
One year in the ground

Her dreaming moves with a moaning wind  
Through the graveyard until she watches herself  
Dusting the plastic flowers that hold their shape  
Against the hard glint of black marble

The polished surface interns her  
In a back to front present  
Where time twists and contorts  
Uncanny and out of order

Crumpled and invalid her will lies  
In the bottom drawer of her being

While her empty womb

Frets for the forsaken babies

This grave calls and claims her

Yet she must linger until her name

Lies in the hollows of a headstone

To be uttered in silence by a passing stranger

Enshrouding her is a vision

Of the ground taking her under

As her daughter holds wilting flowers above

In the melting colours of a sinking sun

She grieves for the earthbound birds

Whose feathers send the dust skyward

Summoning mirages of ghosts

In the clear morning light.

## UNIT 12

Through the back door of his mind

He seeks to read the shifting signs

Of her artistry that lies in covert stains

Or inscribed in the soft sands that surround him

She is the black ink of his secret imagery

Indelible marks smudged in his unknown

Surging now as dancing signifiers

In the bewitching hour of his dreaming

When the day slides through shallow curtains

His thinking slowly rises

While wheelie bins

Sprawled open-mouthed

Like fat ancient Greeks

Purged of night-time ritual

Lie dew splashed and winking

In the sane morning sun.