

Prologue

On this late January morning
the air hangs thick with fog
shrouding the peaks of the
tower blocks on the
peripheries

as they fade into nothing they seem they could go on
forever

I squat down and run the tip of my
finger along a crack. Its ragged edge
is fluid from the water; mossy patches
feel like soft skin.

Here in the graveyard, last season's bewildered
hollyhocks bloom and wither together. A chorus
of wet footsteps glisten on the damp concrete.
I'm not sure at first if I'm seeing fresh
footprints resting on the smooth surface,
freshly embossed by the rain, or something much
older, embedded, revealed to me by the rain for
the first time.

I walk among them to see,
and the ground whispers to
me as my feet meet it.

*My only constant is that every piece is cracked. I trace
my many lives in fissures and breaches.*

*Tread carefully here, observe the changing textures, and
walk with me in time. My concrete scars hold secrets
that would disturb you.*

*Tread carefully here, my uneven territory has a certain
rhythm. Meet me here, or you'll trip. Walk with me; keep
going until you hit something solid. Union awaits.*

*Today I'm watered, this morning's raindrops sliding down
my edges. I let the puddles slip through so the earth
could breathe; a trickle of nourishment.*

*I sigh with wet dust and industrial life. I wheeze
through this cavity, brimming with pebbles and shells.
Springtime stirs between flushes of debris.*

I touch tender green shoots and wonder
which are moving with the seasons and which
have been here all winter. I wonder if any
are disorientated by the change in weather,
as the hollyhocks are.

*I burst from the seams; life breaks through botched
incisions. I put down roots, make a home, rupture.*

*The ones that must come out, in the end, are those that
grow too big; those that threaten to blow this crack
open and expose my human kin beneath.*

As I follow the cracks to their point
of interruption, I yearn to follow
them into the caverns I can't see.