

David Constantine
BOTH KNOWING, NEITHER SAYING

We wake, both know, and neither says. Hearing the rain
Knowing you are awake in the dark and listening to the rain
I should not like you to know that I am thinking
Not of the harboured lovers whose contentment
Under the roof is deepened by the wind and the rain
Beneath the cloud, but of a man and woman I have invented
And she has woken alone in a tangled city
Thinking of him who should by now be in the daylight
Above the rain, in the azure, in sunlight thinking
How safe her room will be whose key he has
How close and home her bed will be, this pair
So concentrated in their single longing
Why must I think for him an hour or more of circling
Stacked and queuing in the empyreum and for her
Only confinement under the lowering cloud
And the black rain slanting in the second-circle winds
Into which zone he will at last descend
All hurry by now, all struggle, why can't I
Spare her, my fiction, knots of hopeless panic
Fearing the haste, impatience, anger of the lanes
Trembling in the fear that even such desire as his
Like hers, so clear and sole, will fret itself to death
In all this everyday of thwarting, fury, menace?
Awake, both knowing, neither saying, lying in the dark
Harboured under a roof from the wind and the rain
Why can't I bless even my poor inventions
With easy meetings? Light falling on this cloud
Above gives it the appearance of a soft white bed
And still I lock my lovers in a world of noise
Harsh lighting, error, gridlock, ambulances.