

## A Craftsman's Tale

I used to own a star-strewn sky. I could hollow tales  
Out of a craftsman's eye, and draw his sorrows  
With a pail out of a haunt well, filled with darks  
And distortions and echoes of fruit-flies. His limp  
Told his glories in war, or his chivalrous battles  
For his fairy bride, or a venture afar, onto the peaks  
Of the Himalayas, where he tiptoed to glean  
From the moon's surface, a speck of dust,  
Gossamered with legends from lonesome times,  
And hid it in his trouser pocket for his sweetheart.

Each night I lay under the heaven, and with a misted gaze  
I picked the brightest stars and scissored them out  
And sewed them together with other evening fires; or knelt  
Just below the waterline, in search of the dreamiest lustre  
A pearl could shine, and gathered all of them and piled them  
Into a stream of diamond rays, with crystal reeds and eddies  
And fish sculpt in ice. But as the sun hovered past,  
Those scenes smoked away, till all that remained were  
A piece of paper and a pencil stump. And I seemed to see  
More to suffering, than a tear from an aching eye.

Away from the glow worms, exhaust smokes vex the night.  
From the aquarium-like houses, there stare  
Grins and grimaces and vacant brows.  
Children stealing crumbs from the table cloth.  
A splat and a clatter, as the mother squashes a fly.  
The father slamming the door, it takes twice to have it shut.  
An array of dirty dishes, as the hosepipe goes  
Drip, drip, pause, drip drop. Stove burning low...  
The paper-crafted stars, the conch-crafted moons,  
In water they all came, in water they'll all go.