

## The Shrine of Remembrance

So many dead, this monument declares,  
so many slain by bomb and bayonet,  
bacillus, bullet, anti-aircraft fire,  
ministerial imbecility,  
incompetent logistics and command—  
this marble, stepped and corniced: all their wake,  
with flags run up and down, 'The Last Post' blown.  
The rising sun it answers with a blush,  
as if of shame at glossing all that waste  
with such grandiloquently mitred stone.

Yet there it stands on dedicated ground,  
a sentry over garden, tree and leaf.  
What shades patrol its marches, fending off  
the city's rabblement of craning towers?  
As if Canute declared 'not one site more',  
and all that tide of concrete, glass and steel  
stood straining at the margins of an earth  
it could not comprehend: futility  
a fit riposte to calculating grasp,  
stupidity wrong-footing spreadsheet crunch,  
the screed of gain, the utile heresy,  
contested by this useless spectacle,  
this droll memoir of cost beyond account.

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Remembrance

Robert DiNapoli

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We simply have to get our stories straight.  
We cannot preen as freedom's champions,  
when far behind our stately progress gapes  
a wake of death: of bodies seized and torn  
in black-ops muggings of entire lands  
to engorge the coffers of corporate deity.  
How can we gasp our delicate dismay  
and wring our hands at every head that falls  
beneath the knives of those who merely turn  
a brutal mirror to our own shady side?  
'Weasels fighting in a hole', said Yeats:  
foreshadowing far more than he could know  
when Zeus' indifferent beak let him slump back.

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## Émigré

In this foreign city, I take my usual seat  
at my usual table, while men and women pass,  
evinced purpose in every glance and stride.  
I nurse my cooling coffee, jot some lines  
in a notebook perched upon one knee that's crooked  
across the other. My hat-brim shades the page.  
I have no business being here at all;  
my home lies far away, beneath the rule  
of craven thugs who tyrannise the paths  
where I have walked between the earth and sky,  
and asked no more of all than the air I breathed,  
and the light that strewed the scene about my feet.

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