

Ponies

Carl Griffin

Waiting for trains we watch the track
from a sloping field. We hold hands.
Having survived such hurt
we now wear smart clothes
and fingernails picked clean of dirt.
An approaching train; the cargo:
a bitter ghost, rowdy demons;
someone is always travelling
long distances to scare us.
The field is wet. Otherwise
I'd lay you down, dishonour you.
I don't wish to stain your dress
or be caught making love
by waving children.
You rub your face with your scarf
till your cheeks are dry.
The field is filled with paranormal light.
You run, stumbling in the mud,
losing your shoes. Still afraid?
I am too. I can't make it
on my own. The train,
when it comes, typically late,
catches me alone.

Fooling Too Many

Carl Griffin

He knows magic is just illusion,
that mirrors and misdirection
cover up the vanished,
but still he carries a wand
as he goes about his day;
at work, the canteen, the tube,
because he really needs it to go away,
that cloud, threatening to drop.
The wand alone won't work.
He needs an assistant, someone
to misdirect his own eyes.
But others can't spot it
and when he begs their help
think he's merely playing tricks.
Till his body tenses at the worry
and the wand snaps in his hand.
And the next day he leaves home
dressed in camouflage, defenceless,
clutching instead a rotten stick.