

An abstract graphic design featuring several overlapping rectangles in various shades of gray and black. The text is arranged in a fragmented, non-linear fashion across the composition. At the top, the name 'Mark Reed' is written in a large, bold, black font. Below it, the phrase 'When the Sun came Down' is written in a smaller, bold, black font. To the right, the words 'and Danced' are written in a bold, black font. In the lower-left area, the words 'in Our street' are written in a bold, black font. At the bottom, the letters 'P O E T' and 'R Y' are spaced out horizontally. The overall aesthetic is minimalist and modern, with a focus on geometric shapes and typographic hierarchy.

# Mark Reed

When the Sun came Down

and Danced

in Our street

P O E T R Y

## THE LOWDOWN

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# FREE Parachute Poetry



**Mark Reed**

*When the Sun came Down  
and Danced in Our street*

**The Hare March**

**Horn of Plenty**

**The Danger**

**This City**

**Galaxy City, Amusement Park**

**Therapy Sunshine**

**When the Sun came Down and Danced in Our  
street**

**Life Goes**

**Life Before History Began**

**The Following Sea**

**The Wave and the Monument**

**Subbie**

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Mark Reed

## The Hare March

Watch the March Hare tremble  
offering conundrums not solutions  
catalysts and confusions bred  
in the tall grass  
where the legions of forest animals march  
three abreast willow on tight pigskin drum  
enamoured by Spring  
emboldened with the bravery of fresh renewal  
the atmospheric supercharge for the animate  
cell division regardless of root or foot or wing  
where all is forward looking and the March Hare rules  
with a crown of clover  
overlooking  
a pasture of endeavour  
more the kingdom of the claw  
than the republic of the fist.

## Horn of Plenty

I am your worst nightmare  
but your greatest dream.  
The player of games  
against a red velvet  
backstage background.  
Defender of Witches,  
Prosecutor of the  
Righteous,  
a badly sketched demon  
able to escape  
unseen between the  
vellum sheets  
of your torn, stained  
pathetic notebook.

this

is the sound of  
your nemesis-  
rose petals moulded  
from the finest of  
metals,  
slowly falling towards  
you from a thundery  
sky.  
Shards of glass that  
constitute a winter's  
lawn on a  
distant, specious  
world.

this

is a spirit that goes bump  
in the night, where  
all the lions are caged  
and the cup of desire  
is full.



## This City

Encapsulate the moment  
in a jar  
stumbling out of the cab  
the fast city an air mail envelope  
moving  
light transitory efficient  
going places

City of the Great Transparency  
the devil's mirror projecting  
reflecting could-have-beens  
in this slow process of  
perfection: relentless reflection  
slow glass, travel through time,  
through silicon grains from Roman feet  
to alien glands

the kerb warm the air thick  
with combustion fumes  
contraption sounds  
the slim swoop of a tower,  
the blare of a molten horn  
the repeated beeps of a reversing  
truck, scudding bikes razor sharp  
street furniture

*-startled out of the way-*

could anyone really be that out of touch?

The urbanisation, so surreptitiously eroded  
by the gentle slosh of suburban  
car shampoo, and the reassuring whirr  
of Flymo's

was it that easy?

Here in this  
metropolitan singularity,  
no choice but to track a personal  
trajectory of failure  
one mapped out from an early age,  
from deep within the arcane  
cartography of this city's grid.  
No allowance to forget:

the swagger of a drunken violent parent,  
reminding broken souls  
of their slavery of their thrall to a place  
where there is no place for regret,  
no lassitude allowed  
no relieving pain  
for a soiled wooden heart,  
a stained concrete soul.

## Galaxy City, Amusement Park

It's amazing how many people live in Galaxy City  
after it closes as the late bars start to wind down  
the tired neon fades and people who  
had worked the day there- and some who had not-  
drift into the compound where they  
crash out for the night in bumper cars  
and carousel carriers shaped like ducks top hats  
shells and various types of fruit and even in the  
hall of mirrors [the most scary of them all]  
and then there is that most favourite of tales  
remember remember that poor soul whatwasname  
who after one too many post-shift de-stressing sniffers  
curled up and passed out in a cab of that vicious  
whirling bastard- The Happy Snapper-  
not strapped in though was he ill-prepared was he not  
for the early morning test by an ignorant  
fresh faced operator who watched amazed as a body  
was flung through the sky, splattering onto the

House of Horrors between Frankenstein's teeth.  
Oh yes  
those were the days of gut rot beer and rough wine  
and home-grown weed and excitement when  
Californian girls arrived with Quaaludes and their  
patchwork rucksacks native American rugs and  
signed Eddie Van Halen cassettes  
spending the summer on a vintage carousel,  
subsisting in Polack Joe's, yep many monster dogs  
were had but really couldn't stand the vicious sauerkraut then  
crashing in The Park and wishing it could be said to  
have made psycho-economic sense but it did not  
particularly when factoring in the wasted love  
and the premium paid for night-time drugs  
but it was warmer than the beach and  
there was a cracked grin camaraderie in  
the communal scent of diesel oil and glucose,  
until the edge eventually wore off and  
a bunk would in time be found where the real fun

hung out, dried and cynically post-modern,  
in a trailer on Broken Star Park.

## Therapy Sunshine

You can take the weather out of the planet  
but you can't take the planet out of the weather

Move in a craft through outer space  
take the sunshine with you

In small bulbs and banks of switches  
floodlights

That illuminate the boosters and antennae  
and aid repairs

Space walking with your own atmosphere,  
air borrowed from the home planet

Undiluted sunshine radiation the therapy of  
superheated space dust

And busy photons with nothing better  
to do than to get to the other side of the universe

As quickly as they possibly  
can.

## When the Sun came Down to Dance in Our street

### *1: The Message*

Talking about hats and tennis visors  
can be frustrating  
when no one is interested  
so I sat on the warm door step and  
decided to pen me a letter  
and it went a lot like this:

Dear Winter,

there is no need to return here. You no longer have a home, well not one to speak of anyway. So please negotiate a deal with Spring, warm yourself around a campfire in a sylvan glade [but remember the insect repellent] close to an appropriate solstice and a convenient solution may well be, that you manage to find another planet to haunt. Summer is here to stay now. It has adapted well and we too have accommodated its needs in order to achieve a mutually beneficial arrangement. Many people are subsequently quite happy and you wouldn't like it here anymore, anyway. So Ciao baby.

Regards,

Thomas Street.

### *2: Strange Phenomenon*

It was then that the sun rose above  
the roof of the church at the end of the street  
and the narrow terrace flooded with bright  
hot light and the windows throbbed  
the thin glass tensed as if suffering  
from sudden birth memories  
and a red ball bounces down the street  
children laugh the sound muffled by the heat  
their voices embraced by pure luminosity  
an inner city solar flare emitted  
for our street alone our street in glory  
is picked up and placed in its own orbit  
it's own solar coagulation

of brick stone glass tarmac plastic wood metal  
a modern fossilization where parallel gravities  
shake hands a happy conglomerate  
thrown overboard as photonic ballast from  
the sun ship  
and I stand laughing and  
the sun winks at me and shimmies a little  
then whoops something like *'ariba! corumba!'*

[it was difficult to hear clearly what with the thick heat  
and me wearing my hat with the ear flaps down  
and Brazilian rhythms on my ipod but I got the  
aural picture]

and then with feather-weight grace denying it's  
undoubtedly bulky atomic mass and with no need  
for a chariot of fire and clearly having dispensed with  
God-like airs and graces the Sun jumps over the  
church roof wearing Wayfarers  
and a riot of an OP polo shirt  
and Bermuda shorts that had frankly seen better days  
and flip-flops that left much to be desired in the smart  
but casual department but so what  
at least I was there  
it was me with the front page hold tight  
swinging around a No Parking sign  
the day  
that day  
when  
it's true  
you had to be there to believe it  
but what joy  
when  
when  
when  
the sun came down to dance in our street.

## Life Goes

There are spiders hanging from my  
bedroom ceiling but this is not a problem.

I have today painted the floor boards in the  
bedroom white, its almost freezing outside;

the bed sheet over the clothes line  
that I forgot about is a crispy

blue striped flag of UN proportions, as if planted  
on some rediscovered Arctic island.

Maybe off Ellesmere Island...  
still worried.

About the spiders coming in.  
Now it's so cold.

But I should most of all be worried about myself,  
about the possibility of falling into a punctured star.

The landscape of my face folded beyond its years,  
hardly full of a thousand stories but at best two,

maybe three. Pointless nocturnal weathering,  
sacrificed sunlight for so little gain.

## Life Before History Began

easy days

How complacent the thought  
When everything is trying  
to kill you, and you are  
trying to kill it.

I mean look at this city;  
or walk the prairie  
or the moor  
and wonder.

And then scrunch up a piece  
of newspaper and, laughing,  
set fire to it with a match  
and throw it to the floor  
at the back of the bus.

Low flames, watch it  
                  smoulder,  
hold my sides:

easy days

Life before history began, when  
the dinosaurs roamed the Earth.  
Innocent primordial bloodlust  
before the toxic torture chamber  
of the Great Now:

where the land is a toy  
and the sky is owned and  
tied up with steel studded leather  
                  straps

to be filled and abused  
and tracked by vapour trails.

The air is still, as if waiting with  
glee for an air-burst: the great  
cleansing of the thermonuclear.

I need further terms of reference  
as I wander around the bus station.  
No attack today;  
*damn* world peace.



*'He is dependable'* your father had said once and you thought  
I was 'A Good Bet,' you said so whenever drunk.  
So I stayed along for the ride,  
not sure what all the fuss was about.

***'This Is Not A Test!'***

Whoopings crazed laughter an explosion of foam a  
salt incrustation of being a personal dimension a divorce from the world.  
Those days of being swept along by my own following sea,  
until I found another safer port.

## The Wave and the Monument

The beach is a plate of  
seashore glass, crescent  
moon around  
the bay.

The ocean heaves:  
azure  
spume foam white  
liner grey.

My back to the void  
I look at the green park  
beyond the grainy esplanade.  
beaten trees  
mermaid sculptures  
a dwarf dressed as a clown  
children dancing  
then the wave strikes:  
it does not so much surge  
over me, as I pass through it  
like a stone.

I leave This Time and engulfed  
in the water  
breath aqua life and  
ponder marine thoughts.  
Give respect to the fish and  
from whence we came;  
paint the best painting  
I will ever paint  
write my opus  
love my all  
think beyond science  
and see how we have got it all  
so very wrong.

Then the loud water subsides.  
Its kinetic energy fizzes in  
illusionary colours around me;

its soda crackles in the slum  
of my nose.  
Somehow I have remained  
standing as the ocean swirls  
around my thighs.  
River currents of potent calm,  
synchronised,  
the sun like a smudge of God.  
The beach glistens in a shifting  
veneer of trickling sea.  
Maybe now it's time to test  
my nerve on the shore.

I focus on the monument.  
It glistens and calms on the  
hill beyond the park:  
a free winged seagull perches on it,  
staring out to sea.  
At me.  
I laugh and mutter  
'Up Periscope.'  
Somehow it seemed the right  
thing to say,  
but what, what to do?

Maybe if I touch the monument  
I will be told.

## Subbie

The subbie that's what the kids call it  
under the subbie come rain or shine  
stark subway linkage a dark inverted trapezoid portal  
allowing delivery of oneself from one place to another  
that is pretty much the same  
as the one you left  
below a dronesome loop road that's going nowhere fast  
lit by one remaining light the others long since smashed  
or carefully obscured by silver spray can art-  
    *aye, a medium mightier than the sword* in these-  
blighted days where Skemster has left his tag  
small crown over the 's' scrunched up fags underfoot  
Saturday afternoon school projects of painted fish  
on stained concrete walls looking long lost long drowned  
even the graphic fish they are overcome by the lagoon  
that floods the subbie when the rains comes down  
mixed with cheap cider and sugary energy drinks  
and bugger me look there Ashie Cobras have left their tag  
something new a new force on the block  
must be kids from the posh estate  
you know that lot further up along the black path and beyond  
the beyond  
four bedrooms and a second hand Lexus in the drive  
yeah cobras not cobrers spelt right in silver and gold spray paint  
that's nice some class they can't be from round here  
they don't belong in our subbie  
going to have to track them teach them a lesson in street craft  
or at the very least see what  
DVDs they've got.



*THE CONTINENTAL FACE*

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