

Still

Grosse Hamburger Strasse, Berlin

Ingrid de Kok

On Grosse Hamburger Strasse
There is silence
It is always silent
On Grosse Hamburger Strasse
Even four boys drinking pilsener
Opposite the frozen families waiting
For the transport
Are mute
The missing house
Hushed
And a man
Who enters the gate
Of the evacuated cemetery
His head covered
Makes no print
No sound
Not even a shuffle.

How grief saturates
The air
Rain is coming
How grief sediments
The stones
Rain is coming.

How no sign
Of guilt
Or remembrance
Brings back voices
To this suspended place
The old inhabitants
Forever stilled

The new owners
Arrested in history's gaze.

Nobody moves
On Grosse Hamburger Strasse
Except shadows gathering
Then dispersing
And this afternoon also
As gentle rain falls on the stones
And upon the earth below
Without a splatter of sound.