

Towns On Hills

Michael Newell

i know the feel of towns on hills
sad as fairy tales.

i've felt their air before:
wind wrapping autumn streets in leaves,
people crossing red lights haloed and sweating
in chill Puget fog.

in a hillside deserted park,
a windblown rain-rusted merry-go-round;
my father runs pushing four sons a daughter
in shadow of Catholic Church.

i forget why i'm here, that tomorrow i leave:
sixteen hours back by Greyhound to L.A.

longing for hook-handed man across the aisle
with red-white-and-blue-tattoo
to put out his cigarette
so i can sleep.