



# Ophelia in London

You drift in white along the Embankment  
with restless hands and voice.  
Whispering.

Footfall scrapes and echoes in the night silence,  
a shadow leaps to touch yours before passing.  
Another tortured soul mutters and slinks in the yellow lampflare.

Your thoughts bend and race and  
slide in chaos, never meeting in coherence and full-stops,  
cruel voices, laughing, teasing, mocking in your mind.

Will it be the river My Lady?  
The oily, silent Thames  
or the thundering rusty train wheels?  
The hospitals are full.

Ophelia, Ophelia walking in the back streets  
with weary, wide unfocused eyes.  
Singing and sad.

The drugs don't work,  
there are no beds.  
So in the end there only is the grass-green turf and stone.

**Janey Antoniou (1957-2010)**

# Ophelia Londinii

Candida veste proxime ripam erras,  
manes agitans, vox vigilans,  
sed quiete susurras.

Pedes in silentia noctis strident.  
Umbra saltat ut te tangat et tum praeterit.  
Alter ego misera facit murmura et fugit ad flavem lucem.

Tua sententiae et flectunt et cursu fluunt et  
in gurgitem cadunt, convenientes dialecticis et finibus numquam.  
Atrocibus vocibus deridentibus, vexantibus.  
Ecce te inludent deceptam!

Visne in flumen ingredi, o mea domina ?  
Nonne Tamesem taetrum et silentem est?  
Nonne Jupiter tonans cum ferro est?  
Non semper asyla in templis sunt.

O Ophelia, o Ophelia! Ambulas per angiportus inclaros,  
defatigata cum oculis apertis.  
Tristia carmina cantans tristis.

Venena non necant. Stabula sunt nulla.  
Tandem, igitur, tantum herba est. Et terra cum lapillis.

*This poem took first prize in the Perceptions Forum poetry competition 2006. Janey Antoniou lived with Schizophrenia. Reprinted by permission.*

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