

New Poem from Jacob Siegel: The Old Gods



The Old Gods (No. 9, 2003)

I.

The towers bloomed up in the dark

Like nails scrolling from dead fingers

While around them a languid curtain fell

In drifts of violet gas that settled on the roofs

All of us honeymooners and mourners

Aware of ourselves as objects in a landscape
That held above the chipped skyline
Bristling in the greater darkness
A dream of New York City

II.

We must have lived inside that dreaming
No more able to escape than words can flee the page
Our old Gods who gave us a magic by which to love

III.

In those days, we could take the D from 59th to 125th in one
stop
Or all the way out to Coney Island
Not for the 24 hour pool room where the Russians played
snooker a floor above the street
I did not go there with you
One night I had you with nothing between us
You were sat up on a jetty rock
I had the tide at my back
You in the shadow of Astroland
Lit by moon and amusement, a castaway