



1987

This, The Summer

L. Danielle Beazer

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FEED MILL FACES

Each morning
sparrows come
shrugging off the brownness
of the only life they know.
Cuddled in cracks
they beak for lice.
Streaked brick
tells the story of their yesterdays.

Chunks of dung
litter rat-goings;
they stare hard in search of hunger.
Listen:
they hum as they shell red wheat.

Outside the feed mill
on El Dorado
bums belch
and spit hooch phlegm.
They hold their city
in tied-up bags.
Up and down the rail they trudge
for nothing.
Modesto. Madera. Fresno.
Neighbors come and go.
Faces roll by shades of soot,
'gadung gadung gadung' of rail
rattles them to sleep.

In dreams
I see on the hard horizon
rats with no eyes
moving across the land.
Sparrows circle and soar
with red-caped heads.
Bums have taken jobs.

James Papworth

THIS, THE SUMMER

Of women single
Who walk th'eased step
Of women alone
Who stay indoors
During summer storms
Watch the streams
Slip down the pane
Against the mesh of screen.

L. Danielle Beazer