

A Ride on the Number 24 Bus by Mike Curtis

The cold evening air
The loud post work drinkers, spilling onto the pavement
The shop windows
The bright lights
The late shoppers
The big red bus

In every doorway and dark alley as I pass,
behind the glitter and the fun
the dirty blankets, the spread newspaper, the can, the bottle
tell a story of human misery, of despair and need.
Half hidden, ignored save for the occasional conscience-salving coin,
the forgotten people eke out their brief lives.
They dare not dream; hope has passed them by.
They are abused, defiled by our indifference.

The magnificent floodlit state buildings
The theatres
The tourists still staring
The revellers streaming across the square
The people getting on and off
My final stop
Home