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## Dark Outside

*Gerard Hodgins*

*Long Kesh*

When darkness falls a mantle of blackest velvet  
covers our world of impenetrable darkness  
From which iridescent lights, orange and yellow  
poke fingers in the sky,  
Fingers that soon disappear in the inky blackness  
but nevertheless keep illuminated  
The wall and wire, and steel and stone  
while black cadaverous mechanical beasts  
hover overhead in monotonous hum;  
Predators hunting for unsuspecting prey  
trying to escape the night.  
When darkness falls the lights come on  
in defiance of nature's law,  
Nothing but light may surround  
our ignoble prison town;  
Least we miss the look of gloom  
which flickers across each ashen face  
every once in a while  
like a wicked malevolent smile;  
For the chained will always strain to be free  
and not surrounded by walls,  
For walls can grind the spirit down  
unless the spirit soon learns  
how to build walls of its own  
to fight for survival on its own holy ground.