SOUNDING DEPTFORD

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Spread The Word

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MARKET

i’m in the square now where we stopped and talked the market square it’s quite different today it seems a lot quieter

you can sit down on a concrete bench here

it is BUSY there’s lots and lots of people lots of chats going on

people sort of huddled in their coats

stephanie and bernadette came round on monday evening and

there's fewer stalls i think or maybe they're just in different

 places and it’s quiet enough that

i can hear a humming

a sound of heels tapping on the pavement and someone with a plastic bag caught on their foot shaking it rustling it trying

to get it off

which might be coming

from the lights there’s kind of a series all hung

above the square making almost like tram lines across it like

 in   european cities and um i can hear a humming which seems that it might come from

the voices of the stall traders can’t really see what’s on the stalls but getting glimpses of a red crate some hi viz padded coats and

a letter blowing around 1947

 must’ve been in a pile of bric a brac and when they cleared up to go home they just left it to blow around on the floor

on saturday we went shopping

he is now a “LANCE CORPORAL”

 4 new ones were chosen so he bought a khaki shirt tie stripes for

the coat and overcoat

also some nice grey wool under

the counter at the wool shop for

a long-sleeved pullover i’ve done the back

and uh i can hear the market

traders talking to each other

there’s not so many radios as

there were before before we

could hear lots of music not so much of that today

can hear people coming up and greeting each other

yeah thinking i should buy a

woolly hat it’s absolutely freezing

i should do that but not doing

that

someone was looking at the gold chain then put it back on the stall and walked off

had a card from paisley’s saying they have hose 2 coupons per

pair 7/2 each do you want any or can you manage for the time

 being

it’s terribly cold here at the moment sun’s shining and everywhere with its layer of snow and ice the

coal seems to be dwindling

 are you still nice and warm

when i was here with you before you talked about how much like a bunker it is the sun on the roof tiles the lichen

been along twice to see mr and mrs sampson paid the rent in advance they

read out a spanish mural i translated it for you

you heard spanish and dutch the

many accents and varieties and dialects of

english

 very lucky someone hadn’t paid up they only just got there before the next prospective tenant in fact she arrived as they left to be disappointed

they are all going swimming

before breakfast or as

bernadette said before we get

up

 and a deeper humming

 i think but quite far off

 sort of varying in pitch

CHURCHYARD

i saw a

skull mounted atop a gatepost

it was huge  and maybe  yeah  my goodness  quite striking  this

skull  the pine tree behind

and in the distance

another trunk  bared branches

i thought  this must be it

the tower

almost medieval strange

i heard two figures walking on the path  a young pair  eyes to the gravel

  politely ignoring me

talking

 to myself  it seems that

people

use this

churchyard

as a cut through  going about their business  what were all the

rustlings in the undergrowth

either

birds

or what  i couldnt see  it was all quite

green  fallen sticks in the grass

and

on the path under my feet  the church  its corner pieces greyish stone  large blocks

like teeth or the foot of a

wooden box

and here

lots of flowers

recently laid  and  just the

aircraft overhead  a blackbirds alarm

and then

someone approached

i think

a woman

and

she got off the path

to let me pass  sort of

giggling as she did  i asked

if she knew where the

memorial

was

she said

no no  and

shouted something towards the gate

and

smiling  said in undertone

that maybe the

keeper

was there

 i cleaved to the church

a more modern

annexe

and found

a ramp up to the door  hollow beneath my cane tip  the little porch sounding

as if there were a space below perhaps a

basement  crypt

really  how to get there  i wanted

a path

not the

grass

or

 graves

well

i walked into branches doctor  grown full straight

one belonged to a

pine tree

a kind of

sap among its needles

which was then upon

my eyebrow  sticky

and

approaching this plaque

i encountered with

my face and hair a set of spindly arms from

what i thought were

planes

to find the place i asked

a figure

spotted

walking round the church  a small dog by their feet  they wore a greenish jacket

and

a light grey hoody pulled up

i couldnt see

their face

until

i asked

 if there was

a plaque for the poet

and it struck me as

i said it

how i described him as

the poet

embarrassed by his name perhaps strange

the figure thought

for a moment and then as if

hit

by some idea

they pointed towards the plaque  on the churchyard wall in white marble

it was modern yes more modern than he and

written with engravèd marks

from which

my fingers

got nothing though a few words were more deeply

graven

or

the dirt

was in them so what i saw was near  untimely and

beneath the plaque  a few candle holders

one a

tiny skull

 close by  perhaps a

dozen biros

CREEK

i’m on the bridge now and it’s

so different the tide is low

and you can hear the water

racing there’s almost like a little

weir

a particularly nasty bollard

shaped a bit like a bell

squat iron

i dunno if you remember that

that place where we stopped

 we heard the

dripping and we saw the the

ripples of the water uh where it

was dripping off the bridge and

into the full very very still creek at high tide

very dark iron

with a loop at the top so it can be

 lifted

a bell that doesn’t ring

do you remember

 you said sometimes

ripples move over over your

vision it’s something that can

happen so when there are

ripples out in the world

sometimes it can trigger this in

the inside world like peaks and troughs like interference

i'm getting thwarted by a dead

end

well now it’s low and in that

same place the water is rushing

 down and creating this constant constant noise train’s

just going over now as well so you’ve got this double sources

of white noise

descending a very strange set of steps into a kind of parking

area and lockup area

just asked a well dressed gentleman flat cap big brown sort of suedey coat about the creek

i can see uh seagulls fishing

 framed by

the railway bridge but i can’t

hear them they’re diving down into the water and taking off again

funny the etiquette of talking to strangers we crossed together with our sticks tapping out together i said i’m using a cane as well i don’t know if you noticed

construction noises and here’s

a DLR train as well

 which makes its own different noise from the overground

 it’s got a whine

and in the distance the square risings of newbuilds

so clean like computer graphics

renderings printed onto the horizon

a builder on a scaffold calling down to someone i don’t understand what are you

saying

and i've come to the other side

 the upstream side to wait for you and there’s another little weir so that’s making its own noise

separated in two by the railway arch

been about a year he’s been

using it found it difficult

at first

and i can just see 3 swans standing downstream the water only comes up halfway up their legs

 seagulls still behind them

an older lady walking in heels

and humming to herself

like a girl

now here come 2 cyclists talking to each other i have to squeeze

up out of their way very busy here very busy little

thoroughfare

3 pavement cyclists

i said sorry they said nothing

and it’s empty i imagine now no-one in there no-one using it just a big echoing empty space

why am i here why would i come here a confluence of

water of footpaths of transport

 a hanging promontory and the graffiti

this park is locked in accordance with daylight hours please listen for the audible sound

it’s been refreshed even since

we were last here something

else painted over

big haunted house gate with a chain that seems locked ok

back to the road

i think it says BEMS and there’s a picture of top cat next to it

and then there’s one the new

one it’s very abstract i’d say bauhaus almost construction kind of black triangles and

a black circle bisected by a thin red line

and soon it will be painted over

in pastel ONLY KUTE VIBES

i get a pleasure rather than a utility from hearing my cane echoing from buildings

at the moment I can hear it echoing off the church and the houses flats

and then some more

hallucinatory ones like a giant

eye and mushrooms on either

side lots of mushrooms

and then some more pieces

large kind of wildstyle i’ve discovered they’re called ornate

 hard to read

one’s painted over a peacock you can still see a massive eye

mum and baby in a pushchair

makes room for me to pass

thank you

you’re so welcome

which itself is painted over a

face with green skin and purple hair and over the top of all of

this i can't read i actually can’t read the word

CORNER

 on the

corner  its cold  sunny

though not the kind of

day

to be lingering

outside

ive got my

hat

on and

gloves  lorries  thundering

its always been like this  i think  an

arterial route

in and out

ive come  specifically to this

spot

but theres

another person

here

dark jacket  hood up  standing on the corner  facing out towards the traffic flowing past them  turning the other way then looking down

that

night i was here not standing but walking down this road

to my friends

house

a little bit up  so  this is the spot where

yes i think  im trying to remember it was

it was

dark

very very

dark

i couldnt see  just the

headlights of cars and peoples shadows  going left

and as i was  walking that  that wintery

night

i became aware of a

group

coming towards me from

down past

taking that

right turn  down the lane  towards the station

and we sort of  came upon each other on this

corner

and they were

loud  voices deep

and

bawdy  raucous

i read

alcohol in the

 way they were  and one

said

and then repeated it  and it was as if the

group had stopped and formed

around me  it felt like  although i couldn't see

them

and one  maybe the same one who had

spoken or shouted

or maybe a different

one  he

seemed to come in very close to me

his voice

very close  and

he yelled

this

circular building

here

a submarines conning tower of glass bricks

ive always loved

glass bricks and tiles

and a kind of overhang its a

pharmacy  painted  green white blue

it says  station  pharmacy

and its all

graffitied  red yellow blue

i wanted to come and

stand

on the spot where you

wrote to me  looking back down towards the phone booth

here

coins and cards  so plastered in posters and stickers

though not fully recovered  i dont think i was ever fully ill one of those coldy  feverish things where the

throat

seems to

scratch

and you wonder

that man standing in that spot on the corner hood up dark jacket turning now one way

then

a woman with a pushchair hand extended in the sun dámela dámela dámela

i walked up here  from

deliberately in fact because i wanted to

walk

past the spot where theres

a plaque on the wall

there quite small not an official one  if you know what i mean  but

a plaque  just in the sun

and i was going to spend a bit more time close to it but there was

a guy sitting on the steps

and

he said

its a

house

right and maybe he lives there

he was sitting on the steps  in the sun

and i didnt want to obviously  intrude on his

space so i walked on

the

winter sun

though low in the

sky  slanting in over roof tops cutting hard shadows in the road

maybe thats what hes

doing  standing on the corner basking in it  waiting

but on the way here  in my

head

  i heard the words

he slows it  right  down

such a noisy road this  those

concrete cubes

those

shin height

adversaries on the

corner

i imagine it must be quite nice to

be standing there in the

sun  watching for a bus

or

waiting for a friend

or about some kind of

 business  who knows what  there are

houses

behind me  i think  they look like

a terrace  flat fronted  sash windows

period  desirable  on the websites and  i think of their

poems

  all about memories of that time and the activist work that followed and  i think of the way in that  evocation  its like

a scar on the landscape

the trauma of a

community

here

i am seeing them

brightly brightly bathed  in this sunshine thats slanting in onto the road  the full blast of it

its quite hard to see them  though i didnt know the exact place  id imagined it was further into

this is the place i think of as

 i suppose  even though this is the

station

so the clue is in the name  i did tell you about this spot before  and i feel strange coming here  but i wanted to come  to the edge of

to

stand

 in the place where

standing in the sun

is a reason to be

standing still  not waiting for a bus  not going home front gardens  flagstones

a taste in my

mouth

like

fumes

so its not

  this isnt

my

mouth is full of fumes  orange jackets  moving  hoods up under helmets

and a

siren

passing

lights