

LAURENCE LEVY-ATKINSON

*Still, there's the rain*

Still, there's the rain  
And the nightworks.  
Street after street blocked with trucks  
And those spinning, yellow lights  
That make no noise but squat in the overfull gutters,  
Shutting off one route home,  
Then another.

I always loved them,  
I even dreamed, as a kid, of working through the same thin hours  
When the rest of the world was safe and asleep;  
Of seeing the city from backstage,  
With all the makeup stripped away.  
Of being another worker out in the cold and city fog,  
More familiar with the locks on doors  
Than with rush hours.

Even now I relish it,  
And feel that same thrill like dancing,  
When the café workers start to yawn and stack empty chairs,  
Boxing you into a corner until you too are out there amongst the stillness of it,  
Everything unlit and quiet  
Like a diorama of a city,

That only nightworkers get to explore;  
Or a plaything for those who never learned  
When to go to sleep  
And when to get moving.