

Selective memories

That summer's evening...

Sultry sunlight mottled the surface of the river.
We heard the mallard drakes
quack, dropping in sequence to the water,
symmetric ripples in their wakes.

At that moment...

The ducks owned all the water.
Haughty pigeons cooed, perched high on branches,
looking down on all below.
We owned the entire tow path,
and on the further bank
geese bathed in the late evening glow.

But now I know...

That while those pastoral sights were real,
the sound track - the gentle hum of insects,
the breeze, the birds, the water - is in my head.
For the sounds were surely post-industrial –
car horns, taxis, lorries, tyres -
from the busy road bridge overhead.

But still ...

At dusk the silent deer came down to drink
the muddied river waters,
and wide-eyed cattle settled to protect
their wooded night-time quarters.
As distant engines roared.

Selective memories of ...

The River Wey; the motorway:
side by side, but worlds apart -
an expressway; and a less stress way.
Pervasive noise, a million cars,
but by us in the slow lane, all ignored.