Manuscript

Maggie Holland

Prince Louis Battenberg is burning the Admiralty lights down low
Silently sifting through papers sealed with a crown
Admiral Lord Fisher is writing to Churchill, calling for more Dreadnoughts
The houses in Hackney are all falling down
And my grandmother sits on the beach in the days before the war
Young girl writing her diary, while time seems to pause
Watching the waves as they come one by one to die on the shore
Kissing the feet of England

Oh the lights of Saint Petersburg come on as usual
Although the air seems charged with a strangeness of late, yet there's nothing to touch
And the Tsar in his great Winter Palace has called for the foreign news
An archduke was shot down in Bosnia, but nothing much
And my grandmother sits before the mirror in the days before the war
Smiling a secret smile as she goes to the door
And the young man rides off in his carriage, homeward once more
And the sun sets gently on England

Ah the day we decided to drive down to Worthing, it rained and rained
Giving us only a minute to stand by the sea
And crunching my way through the shingles, it seemed there was nothing changed
Though the jetty was maybe more scarred that I'd known it to be
And Mandi and I stood and stared at the overcast sky
Where ten years ago we had stood, my Grandfather and I
And the waves still rushed in as they had the year that he died
And it seemed that my lifetime was shrunken and lost in the tide
As it rose and fell on the side of England

Prince Louis Battenberg is burning the Admiralty lights

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