

John Forbes (1950-1998)

TROUBADOR

where the heart burns
like an old tyre
filling the air
with flecks of carbon
& a terrible stink—
that's where I set up my altars
not realising
my personal pain
was a vision of the future
where fun will consist
of smoking crack
on the edge of a garbage dump
you've just spent
15 hours rooting in
because you're in debt
for the price of a bed
& the suburbs have disappeared
into the huge,
ecologically sustainable
estates of the rich
where Love has retreated
like it did before,
only to re-appear
after a couple of centuries
when its owners had got
utterly bored,
hacking each other
—& us—to bits