

# New Poem from Jacob Siegel: The Old Gods



The Old Gods (No. 9, 2003)

I.

The towers bloomed up in the dark

Like nails scrolling from dead fingers

While around them a languid curtain fell

In drifts of violet gas that settled on the roofs

All of us honeymooners and mourners

Aware of ourselves as objects in a landscape  
That held above the chipped skyline  
Bristling in the greater darkness  
A dream of New York City

II.

We must have lived inside that dreaming  
No more able to escape than words can flee the page  
Our old Gods who gave us a magic by which to love

III.

In those days, we could take the D from 59th to 125th in one  
stop  
Or all the way out to Coney Island  
Not for the 24 hour pool room where the Russians played  
snooker a floor above the street  
I did not go there with you  
One night I had you with nothing between us  
You were sat up on a jetty rock  
I had the tide at my back  
You in the shadow of Astroland  
Lit by moon and amusement, a castaway