

LITTLE GIRL IN THE BARBICAN KITCHEN TOILETS

Hope she came here just for this:
from furthest Fen Lane by the River Beam
following some buried stream.

Hope she practiced on the Tube:
flexed & set her small right
foot precise against its mottled floor.

At Moorgate Station pigeons &
commuters saw her step
& stopped mid-flight

they joined the flocks
of city-slickers who'd come to see
what she could do.

Did she falter at Silk Street?
or smoothly slip past that glass
toes brushing the concrete

then feather-light through
the canteen-kitchen where diners
clapped their cutlery

to reach the double-swinging
doors, the cubicles, the sink,
and that shiny pedal underneath
the sink

& so with one well-rehearsed
stamp, she showed her mum
how to make the water
run.

Of course, not much of this is true.
There was no pilgrimage or crowd,
only me queuing in a smelly
public toilet, while a little girl
washed her hands.

But I heard the girl
when she told her mum
in no uncertain terms:
"THIS FLOOR PEDAL IS THE BEST".

So shyly, after they both had gone,
I tried her step:
placed the sole of my lace-up right-foot trainer where
hers had been.

And sure enough, slow at first,
but then cascading soft and cold,
water filling-up the sink,
water filling-up my hands.

& I guess touching water is
what I mean when I say
I'm learning to find
miracles in the everyday.