

City Life

Adapted from The County Boy by Pablo Neruda
New York City

Under the thick and impenetrable skyline, New York's monstrous soldiers stand tall, shadowing swarms of people below. My concentrated footsteps pound the pavement as sirens wail, horns beep, phones ring. Overcooked hot dogs flood through the city...already overcrowded with smells. This is a vertical world: skyscrapers tower on...a sudden shadow escapes the darkness, diseases invade the guilty streets...they deserve it after all! I stumble over a gap in the pavement, uncovering the discarded, the cast-offs, the rejected.

Going on, gas lingers... I pass through colonies hurrying on to their modern slavery. From them, they prod and push as they rush through. Upturned heaps of the unwanted: 'what a treasure'! Dirty yellow feathers have given it ears, black fleas bounce around as freckles, a plastic bag, its skin, a stick is it's nose, a banana skin is it's mouth, two decayed pieces of circular chicken had played the part of eyes. It is a gruesome face sneering at the seagulls ripping it to pieces.

Farther along, each skyscraper is separated by a forbidding alley way. They soar up over the overpopulated city and everything is the same: the same height, the same look and the same style. Drinking fountains are loitered around but never used for the fear of 'germs' without realising the city is a germ in itself. A pigeon flies high above the hustle and bustle.

Close by, dandelions nod their grimy buds in the wind. The structures are like people and the humans who work there are it's blood and arteries. Noise is the law of the city with its cars and people and constant shouting.

Anyone who hasn't been in a busy city doesn't know this planet. I have come out of that landscape, the towering building, that noise, to go quietly moving through the world.

Adapted by Morgan Taylor, Ruby Garrett and Ella Britton