

Hymn to the Local Gods

Shriekback

Where are the bones and the flowers?
Where are the shrines to the local gods?
They never write now or ring us
Whatever happened to the local gods?
What are their names? Where do they live now?
Where do we go to light a candle to them now?

They held the soul of the city
The streets were bright with the local gods
The days were sweet with their meanings
The nights were vivid with the local gods
The day they left we never saw their going
We woke one morning and the world was less than it had been

In the canals and the wastelands
Up in the spires, under the flyovers
Still you can see, with the right eyes,
The shining presence of the local gods
Stand in the silence you can hear them whisper
Hearing their laughter echo in the steel and stone

So leave a fire in the window
Pour the wine under the underpass
Let's all go down to the river
We'll go swimming with the local gods
They never died we only lost their number
All you can find here worship and more will appear