Feathers

By Richard Clegg

Until this evening your signs were lean, 
And for a time far between
When once legion, loving
Keenly felt and seen

One day you startled me, I swear, 
With your presence in a feather 
White and unexpected on a stair 
In our Spanish casa where 
We used to share our summers 
With that sign you said 
"Well done, hang in there"

For a long while you would often whisper 
Encouragement in my ear 
Would send the owls to hoot from afar 
Or to roost in my tree quite near 
And with their night calls, 
Speak to me of your endless love 
Your understanding of my loneliness 
Awareness of my grief and despair

As I heard them in the dark or stared 
Into their daytime eyes 
I was comforted a sign 
Like the feather

That was when I was filled with fear 
Could barely cope without you near 
Hour to hour 
Day by day 
Year by year

While still here yet knowing you'd be there 
You once promised 
Your presence in a breeze caressing my forehead 
Then you were dead

There was nothing left but your signs 
A feather, owls, a breeze 
Your face in the full moon
Then for a while I was naughty and loose
   With silly cigarettes and booze
My punishment? To lose
Your presence, the signs and
With your absence silence
Itself a sign perhaps that I should find
Myself groping, stumbling
Bereft of help of any kind
Left to feel my own way Home
   Alone

Until this Winter's evening as I tread
   The Marktplatz and all was dead where
Upon the moist cobblestones you spread

FEATHERS

Feathers Everywhere it seemed

As if a white winged angel had
Fought to death for me my Demons
Saying, "Fear not"

You had given me one last stunning sign
   That all is fine
   That it is time
This moment
This life
   Is no longer ours but

Mine