

OUT FOR AIR

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ALSO BY OLLY TODD

Odeum Spotlights (Rough Trade Books, 2018)

Out for Air

OLLY TODD

Penned in the Margins

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Yan, tyan, tethera

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The Fuel

A man so Embarcadero as to be emanating bridges.
The big red one.
The one over the oil farms.
Any but the one that rippled.

For one skater in the backseat of his future
to travel safely across.
For another fishing out a windcheater in the rucksack
of his ambition
to shelter under.

And the bridges are endless
beyond the cantilever
of reality
and the waters are friendly, lapping
at the trusses

and Cow Hollow High's canteen chairs
look between their legs
for his manoeuvres; its scholars

grip their pens;
its corridor floors shine.

A man so Presidio as to be the plateau of hills.
The eight-hairpin cobbled one.
The one with the hotels with the cellophaned bear claws
for breakfast.
The one mellowing out past west-flank Black Rock.
Any but the one where speeding car
wing mirrors brush
T-shirt sleeves.

For one skater timing traffic from a hillcrest café
to get the green lights.
For another re-reascending
to roll instead of stroll for a welcome sec,
blissing out calves, quads, glutes.

And the hills are summitless
above the bedrock
and the gradients are kind, rendering
off the curbcuts

and the glass eye of prejudice cracks
on the mirror held up
by his graphics.

A man so Soma as to be the fuel of foundries.
The one where the baseball diamond now stands.
The pierside one.
The locomotive one shipping out
boxcars of fuss, any but
the one bringing them back.

For one skater to gain his stability, geometry, nimbleness
and another and another and others
and the sparks are innumerable that leap
from the fires
and the welds are honest, floating
on the bearings.

And the Ellesses
and the toast raised in polystyrene cups
and the humility in a twoscore of shout-outs
resound with my crew and I.