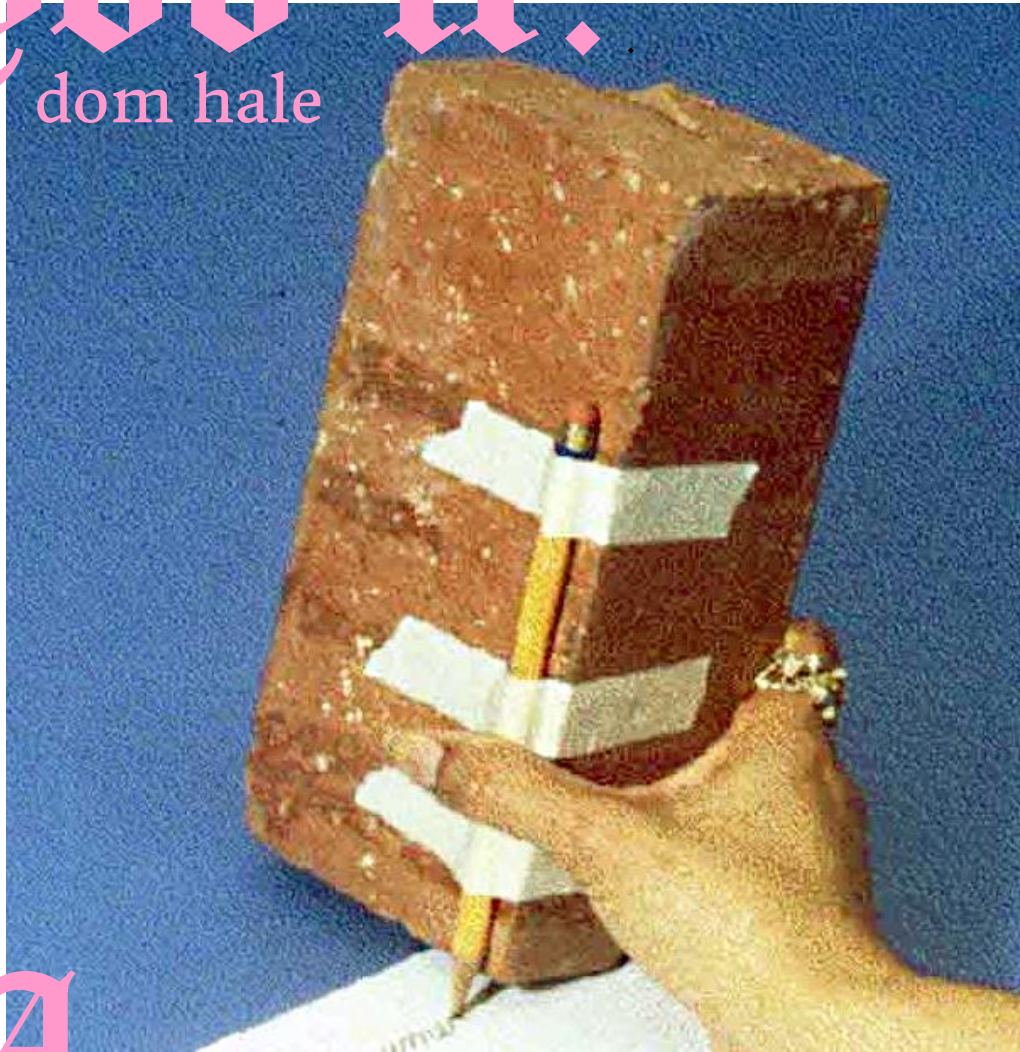


# God it.

dom hale



**A**nd all of a flower it's underway. Rabid light  
To the divine timer, the friend who blew full pelt  
Barking on the tongue, sweet, off-peak  
Hurling in from Manchester without a tune or rest.  
What I need is one more autumn, one more shot:  
Tonight I'm 27 and the adrenaline  
Whips like wishes to a skiver on the pulse  
A sky lilac of the federations. But I reckon  
We'll be gorgeous from now on. There rolls another evening  
Swift fidelity and grace: my stolen life lies naked, my  
Stolen life zips up, losing those bold rosaceous figures  
Tracing the dodo job in a vast capital, losing you  
By another when Leith's all perfect light. Boats and gulls  
Wearing the sea and the wet buildings talking shop  
Jitter what it means to be a fucking symptom,

How trying to blink back rucked stuff  
On the far side of the rational shade  
Only becomes an infographic, nerves serried,  
A foil of city speech to stick in the craw. And then some,  
Through the revolving door. But I'm not fussed  
Shit news oils in, it's Saturday, there's cops  
Watching on Talbot Road. Smell of tarragon,  
Smell of brine. My head's high gone, and honestly I miss  
A bar, sounds alongside the lot, not far  
In a second that welcomes every thought your head could have  
Wound to a familiar pier without suicide or cost.  
This one's an awful world to wake up lonely in  
So leave the avenue, scop, sack it off,  
Bite the magnificent air: it's spring's colour negative  
Stepping out at enmity with something in my eyes  
The portal forks. A no-show then. If I'm a little on the nose  
I'm nuzzling in. You won't forget, you won't  
Nod off, they'll never pin you down. My brilliant comrade.  
Those cunts can't touch us. Hear me. Get lost.





till, everyone moves on. I mutter like a fucker  
And my facemask slips, overdone by Martin Hannett  
Paying fees to the bouncers on Parnassus, tutting  
Ranks of the employed. Time prosecutes the pores  
Hammered, desperate, alone: it is onerous  
Night on the world and the proprietors of history  
Unfurl their grim bought gullets in plainsong.  
But they will never recruit me, never take what life  
I now stand by. Just try. So long. Use it cautiously,  
An anthem stings the noose's neck, a gale of laws  
Until the burning orchard's up in arms  
And I'm not done. You have to slap my face  
To make these run, you're sick of it. The sticklers  
With their literary careers to think about might take the piss  
Or the pointless lunch monitors who'd have it all  
Homogenised, make every poet toe an arbitrary line.  
The pandemic really brought out the officer in you.  
We have to get above all that. Sinew after  
Sinew, lily pad to lily pad, a Serco cloud  
A circler on his arse. I murmur evening to the waves  
I wait by the kebab shop and I worry, shivering  
About my friends at work and in the useless plastic street  
Or lying on their beds in ordinary despair and  
Fear. Spent half of lockdown sleeping, dead,  
The other in a fucking trance. The poets' fire  
To the head. Too much to parse. A swallow passes on.



I have nothing else to say. My mouth is thick  
With nettles, in a nettle song. Those shoes you're in  
They suit the season, though these days every season's  
Wrong. It was never reasonable for me to write to you  
Disaster on disaster sent me west  
I blew everything, bone idle, drinking in  
A buttoned cast-off shirt with all the worst ideas  
A séance for the ones I never met. And so  
You turn off the lamppost and parts of weather  
Topple from the prehistoric sky. Hold tight.  
I'd like to be a better person, face out, face there, under  
The heaving stars. A finch or a trowel. A sprig or a prow.  
Put away the temperature gun. There is no  
Handbook how to do it and I set off from the missing bar.  
*It must be otherwise.* A mirage now  
Your buds and decoys lie around us at the only  
Pick-up point, you know I mean it in a seaside  
Town. A weak connection is the anti-note. And then it  
Hits in fucking waves. Capital is coming down.

