

# Criticism of the Dead

*by Neil McCarthy*

The wind has no voice  
and yet we listen,  
perhaps imagining the ramblings  
of a mad man;  
the only one to take an outside  
table and tea, biro-sketching  
the trees and  
the letting go of leaves.

Autumn is in a canter,  
head held high — it being  
the greatest alchemist —  
zig zagging the 7th & 8th Districts,  
brushing both the dead and  
the dying with a whisper:

*Winter may well be your judge  
but do not leave quietly.*

Through windows we time  
the moon rising, from nothing  
to a quarter crescent,  
from pitch to pallor;  
a bite taken from the Host:  
a criticism of the dead to forfeit,  
for what is memory  
if not a ghost?

*- for Irene Szankowsky*

