

Already There

by Simon Kearns

The children gathered around it, thick with inquisitiveness and wary attraction. It lay on its back, rocking slowly from one side to the other, a mockingly mechanical motion, one leg in the air, clawing at the void that was approaching, yet already there. They watched, those children, eyes showing wonderment - terrified and excited and repulsed all at the same time. The chick, a swallow I think, one of those fallen on first flight, *was* them. Simply them: young, helpless, at mercy. A mother shooed them. I caught a glimpse of it. Best not look. But the children would. They looked because they had to know. But what do I know?

