City Shadows

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Abstract

I love on thirty-fourth street My name is Esther...
City Shadows

I live on thirty-fourth street
My name is Esther.
I like this here corner —
    The light edged the shadows under her eyes sharply.
How d'yu like my hair?
I had it done today —
    The light gleamed on each sallow hair.
Yu think I'm pretty?
Jees --You ain't so bad —
    The light edged each alley-way
    and spilled toward her from every street.
Heavy bars of light —
She answered a question —
She motioned at the dim green light in a building.
Her arm rested lightly in another's.
While the broad bars of light divided by buildings
converged behind her.
In the jungle of bars
sat a small bar.
The bright head bobbed through littered humanity —
In the midst of the amoeba population
the bright head garbled idly,
My name's Esther — I live on thirty-fourth street —
Winding through the bars,
bars for drinking,
bars for cages,
winds the serpent.
the dingy train of hope.
In her dingy life Esther
Sees a gleaming serpent.
Catch the hope —
Go away —
The suburbs, the mink coats, the other lands —
The sunshine —

I, too, am Esther. I live in a suburb —
I have a fur coat —
I think Europe is lovely in the summer.
Heavy bars of light converge.
Light spilled from between the building.

I guess I gotta go.
Esther is nervous.
Esther is afraid.
The serpent will leave,
gleaming in the sun without her.
Clutch the handbag, Esther —
Hers is shiny patent.

Thanks for the drink —
Leave the gaping mouth, Esther.
Scurry into the street streaked with broad bars of light—
They are only shadows, Esther.
They are only shadows, —aren't they?

—Dycie Jane Stough