



APRIL IN BROAD STREET

Red in dress and claw
they skimp on clothes.
hormones shooting clear
to the chilling sky:
England's drowned dog roses
blown unsteadily out to play.

Pub to bar. bar to street,
girls drink. Spirits high.
cocktails up. straight
off to mix and match
they go. Voices multiply.
screwed up to weekend pitch.

Bosses drink, workers drink,
students drink, shirkers drink,
good ones drink, bad ones. drink,
intelligent and sad ones drink,
fraudsters drink, teachers drink,
singers drink, preachers drink,
the purposeful and hapless drink,
those who should not go strapless drink,
beauties drink, snooties drink,
girls who think they're cuties drink,
long-haired drinkers, curly drinkers,
strutting, rutting, twirly drinkers,
all the girlfriends, daughters, sisters,
dance a thousand ankle twisters

till heeled and reeling, blistered.
plastered, the street sings round
their whirling heads. Time shines
in the blurring trees; stars burn
in the ditched and pitching road.
The wheeled night turns for home.
catching them as they fall.

Jenny Baines