

SUSAN BLACKBURN FROM STOKE ON TRENT - FINALIST

Unwanted Independence

So many changes,  
faces come and go.  
A blur of loss,  
so the memories don't stick  
like cheap sellotape  
they peel.

Isolation.  
A way of life,  
a learned behaviour  
to feel so alien in such a familiar place,

it follows you  
like a shadow of unwanted independence  
that singes the edges of a new life,  
a new home.

The smiles feel frozen, unrealistic.  
Resistance flashes angrily  
at first.

But in time  
the memories stick with superglue;  
the coffee rings, the scent of perfume,  
the blue tack that spoils the walls.  
And then slowly,  
the fire calms to a protective flame  
always burning silently  
with the knowledge of pain.