



CPAG writing competition - creative writing winning entry

# Bellingham Road

*By Claire McLean*

you cling to your mother's side like a possum.  
the wall beside you smells of fresh paint:  
somebody's scribbled an attempt  
to claim a place. lucky  
you can't read yet, eh?

there are cars sinking  
into the lawn  
and chewing gum is cooked  
onto the footpath.

at school, you'll get the crap desk  
with a bung leg in the back row,  
next to a window that doesn't shut.  
exposed to the draught,

stuck,  
you'll stay where you're seated  
and no complaining.

down the other end of town,  
priests are drinking beer and laughing.  
in shiny hospitals,  
doctors are sewing heart valves  
into seventy year old farmers.  
blue-eyed kids are brushing their teeth.  
some academics are researching  
the inner workings of fish.

you're stuck.  
your road fenced on both sides  
and no gaps.