

INTO THE WOODS

Trees
taller than the library,
taller than the Clock Tower in town,
taller than the Cathedral!
Taller than her eyes could take in.
Taller than her father.

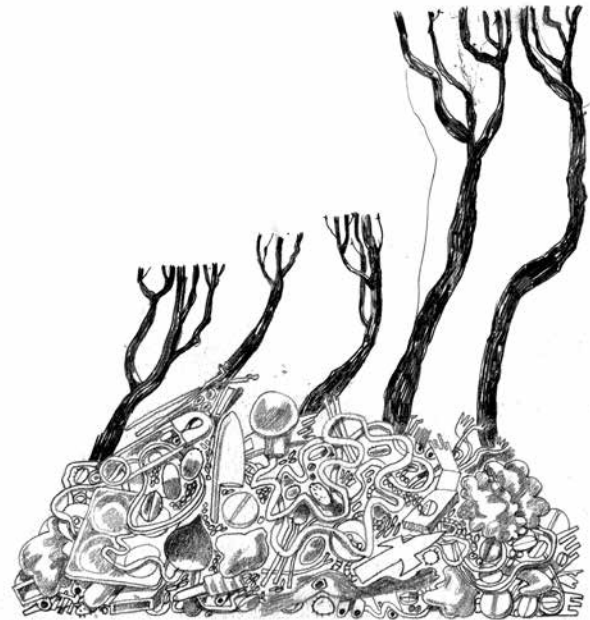
So tall their tops grazed heaven.
Wider than the hug of her entire class,
so thick that roads could be cut through them.

A path wound through this towering forest,
A well-trod, well-dragged path.
A path where the grass daren't reach.
A path littered in mounds of stuff.
The columns of computer consoles.
marble spires, jelly-sweet monoliths,
wrapped chocolate bars forming steeples.
A temple of the outstretched arms of dolls.

A mess of hoodies (mostly red).
A spoil of golden balls.
And nuts, lots and lots
of half-gnawed nuts.
Making ridges and cliffs,
elevations and precipices.

Daphne follows the trail,
where flowers have no head to grow,
until she sees a sparkling, a shining.
A hut! Tiny.
Shimmering in the sickly forest light.

A forest of past memories
lies in wait for all of us.
A place where earth and dried seeds,
dead wood, teeth and fur conspire
to get us all lost.



IN A WOOD NEAR YOU...

Take a walk in any forest,
wood or copse
in 'the sticks'
or the edge of town.

Search long and deep enough,
let your feet guide you
and memory lose you.

You'll find a structure like this one,
the shadow in which
Daphne now stands.

A misshaped thing
fitting and out of place.
Wrong and absolutely right.
Remembered and never seen before.

For Daphne
it was barely bigger
than the curtained-defined space
of a hospital bed.
Built of gadgets.
Cables threaded its sides
buried themselves
deep into the earth like drips.
Circuit boards and buttons,

keyboards and beeping screens
littered its surface.
Along with phones!

Mobile phones:
crumbling iPhones,
archaic Blackberries,
grizzled Nokias,
exhausted Motorolas,
petrified Kindles,
aged X-boxes,
fossilised Commodores.

As she kicked at the
buzzing beeping construction

she failed to hear
the paw steps approaching.