

Bourne
toWrite...
creative writing
workshops

Addict

by Fran Duffield

I didn't realise my dependence,
until they were taken away:
when I couldn't have the real thing
only the screen substitute,
the overstretched carnival lips,
gleaming teeth on cue

but worst of all, was the fixed grin,
worse than mouthless,
printed for blank faces,
barren as a death's-head
crumpled as a discarded Mr.Punch

the creeping horror
of the painted smile,
when all the real ones
were gagged and bound

such a small thing to have to give up,
understanding between strangers,
tenderness between friends,
but my craving won't go
for the ancient language
of the smile