

into,

It was

the world he'd fallen

and

the world.

she'd fallen into.

was like

he'd once had a

thing happy people come

shiny cars and play and sit on the

with their backs to the grim warren

es and failing shops behind them on the

ways took their laughter and brightness

when they left as the sun went down. They

like George.

He was a tourist.

She was here for the duration.

So she stood and stuck out her hand and took the money and zipped her pocket tight so she wouldn't lose it.

'This isn't enough for a book. We'll have to

He pushed off the railings and jogged

'Come on then. This place gives me

They retraced their steps the

went left through the con

headed north





bird looked at it. Having had longer to practise than any of them, it thought faster, and decided it was time to leave.

It opened its wings quietly and took a step forward into the air.

The Fusilier's eyes caught the movement. His hand moved in a fast blur.

There was a *CLICK* as he unsnapped the bayonet and a *WHIRR* followed by a simultaneous *THOCK* and 'SQUAWK!' as he threw the sword-sized knife hard and fast across the pavement.

The Raven found itself pinned to the side of the building, with a blade through the wing. It didn't feel any pain, just irritation.

'No, you don't,' said the Fusilier, as he rapidly fed bullets into the magazine of his rifle through the open breech and slammed the bolt home on a live round.

'Squawk?' clacked the Raven, trying to look friendly and unthreatening and cuddly, which is a problem if nature has fitted you out in greasy feathers and decided you should wear basic bad-boy black.

'Not a chance,' said the Fusilier. *BLAM*. He blew the Raven into a cloud of feathers that would have been the makings of a very stylish feather duster if your tastes leaned to the softer end of the Goth spectrum.