

Julie Leibrich

KISSING THE SHUTTLE

It might have been an aunt of mine.
Or yours. This factory girl clattering
her way through seven o'clock silence.
Clog by clog, flinting up the morning dark
down weathered streets.

Clack signalled start. Listen for the crack
of steel on stone and look for the spark.
See the bench where she watched
the shuttle fly. Warping, wefting, weaving
till the yarn ran out.

That's when the kissing began.
Mouth to teak, sucking threads from India.
Taste the fibre in the lungs. Watch romance
slip away. But feel the quality of cotton
at the other end of day.

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