

## ALICE NELL ALLAN

### VERTIGO

We fly in over the delta  
descending over the mangroves  
banking before the cemetery  
to hang suspended  
or so it seems,  
above the tombstones  
spinning.  
We are so low, their fingers  
full of the dead, at the same time  
grab for us. Greedy they seem  
for the cemetery  
is truly well tenanted.  
A whole suburb of real estate  
diminutively developed  
and all the mortgages  
so well secured.

We're really very low, can  
almost read their names —  
yet if we could read them  
ours must be among them.  
Is time standing still?  
Or are we caught in  
the magnetic field  
of Death?  
We're close to something strange,  
close to it,  
and the children, whose minds  
are quite unclouded by science  
frankly fear we shall fall!

It is possible, quite  
possible, we could  
fall.  
Yes, planes do  
fall.  
But we  
have Captain Pluperfect in charge  
with his thousands of hours  
in the air,

and on the ground  
he'd have thousands of reasons for living.  
(Although if the Law of Averages  
conspired with the Law of Gravity  
as it does sometimes,  
as it sometimes does,  
what could he do?  
Even Captain Pluperfect  
can fall, once.  
Need fall,  
once only.)

## VOLKER WOLF

### cultural shock

some latitudes closer  
to the sun  
opposite everywhere  
leisure is  
catching  
people take off  
their heads  
floating

some platitudes closer  
to their figures  
opposite everyone  
catching  
is leisure  
we take off  
our heads  
shrivelling