

ADELE GRAF

26 PILS STREET

IN VENTSPILS, LATVIA

I retch, but slink inside
this apartment building's
cracked brown door.
Heave myself
up piss-stained stairs
to the second storey.

What's the story?
A chronic stomach-churner.
Here where I trespass
between spattered walls.
Where Nazis killed
my family.

Now again boots stomp
on steps below.
I stop all camera clicks
till four boys
round the landing
and mime for a photo.

One wears a red jacket.
Another grins. A tall one's arm
blocks a short one's face.
Kids, like my cousin Ruth
who'd lived in apartment 2.
Her cake, baked in 1941
left to cool.