A LATE BULLETIN

a jet drags its vaprous scar across the sky:
modernity, televised war,
breeds its own commentators.
they abound like pet satellites
sniffing out the larger movements of our time,
explaining blood, death in context,
why we must evacuate the stars.
a jet drags its vaprous scar across the sky.
war breeds its own commentators.
I charge no one: the world, for the most part,
is as literal as a casualty list.
life other than ours begins at 6 o’clock,
& just as this poem feeds on the entrails
of a day’s gutting, so the curiosity
of after-dinner minds, though both
bib the aegis of higher learning
& eat in privacy. I charge no one,
having held this afternoon a quiet boy
whose dog lay dying
where Kings & Shelbourne intersect
while a jet dragged its vaprous scar across the sky
& cops detailed the damage done.

— Patrick White