Where I Live- Arundhathi Subramaniam

(for Anders who wants to know)

I live on a wedge of land  
reclaimed from a tired ocean  
somewhere at the edge of the universe.  
  
Greetings from this city   
of L’Oreal sunsets   
and diesel afternoons,  
deciduous with concrete,  
botoxed with vanity.  
  
City of septic magenta hair-clips,  
of garrulous sewers and tight-lipped taps,  
of ’80s film tunes buzzing near the left temple,  
of ranting TV soaps and monsoon melodramas.  
  
City wracked by hope and bulimia.  
City uncontained  
by movie screen and epigram.  
City condemned to unspool  
in an eternal hysteria  
of lurid nylon dream.  
  
City where you can drop off   
a swollen local   
and never be noticed.  
City where you’re a part  
of every imli-soaked bhelpuri.  
  
City of the Mahalaxmi beggar  
peering up through   
a gorse-bush of splayed limbs.  
  
City of dark alleys,  
city of mistrust,  
city of forsaken tube-lit rooms.  
  
City that coats the lungs  
stiffens the spine  
chills the gut  
with memory  
  
City suspended between  
flesh   
 and mortar   
 and foam leather  
 and delirium  
  
where it is perfectly historical  
to be looking out   
on a sooty handkerchief of ocean,  
searching for God.