Daryl Qilin Yam

Drain Circling, A While Ago

*For John Taylor Funeral Service, Leamington Spa*

1
John Taylor: tell me you caught a glimpse
of that streak across the sky

or perhaps I am delusional, John Taylor;
perhaps I am simply seeing things

but John Taylor, reassure me
that although the dead are right round

the corner, you still believe in water,
John Taylor, and its passage across

the blue space above you, the white light
clear and radiant above your service.

Have faith, John Taylor. I say that to myself
all the same, John Taylor. I say it now.

2
The smell of rain this early evening
suspended in the air. Just water.

Daryl Qilin Yam. 'Drain Circling, A While Ago'.
It is half past six, and the sky is grey though light. Earlier this morning
two men came, and repainted the old tables in the courtyard.
Now there is water on the new paint. Somewhere the sound of straw
scrubbing against a dirty floor; somewhere near and yet I cannot see.
(Tonight my window will remain open.)

3
It rains in the dark, John Taylor. I sit by my window and,
on top of smelling the rainfall, I listen to its harmonies
played in the courtyard. John Taylor tell me you hear its music:
the blue be-bop. Tambourine. Tom-tom. All you can see of me
is a narrow bar of light in the gap between the curtains.
John Taylor, John Taylor, my 10 p.m. suitor pray me you dancer

4
Hey John. It’s been a while. I’ve tasted freedom but it was raining all week
and so I could not meet you even if I wanted to.
Yesterday we had sunshine, briefly and this morning, again, the illusion:
a red-leafed tree, overlooking the courtyard,  
and a circle of seagulls

casting illusions over George Street.  
I had a friend named George, once.

Does he care for me. Will I care  
for you. Shall anything happen, another time.

_Daryl Qilin Yam_