to hear them and the afternoon
I not read this emerged from
night and all day and the
undred and ninety nine brimming

Your sympathies were with
paid little heed to the soft lap
ness made of dried timothy grass
al at hand it served its purpose
afraid of deus strami tus,
my land of make believe — or
it's sad to think that we're
old asshole. When the actors
round everything becomes
leny cries puts the delicious
her brandishing four pounds
he's head. Look out! shouted
the wind whistling in her
is a Mindlord on Janie's
coming intolerable to the
is a lei running from one side
gulf between trouble and pain
must be kept clean ungainly
g to the dotted lines. Sing
door brought an orchestra
with joy our four imaginary
i write. Up in the mountains
water color lake full of
The original manuscript of
an island of lichen covered
during a heavy thunderstorm.
approving people everywhere.

SLOW
by Koushik Banerjea

He didn't make a point of hurrying across the road.

Too many people already made fun of him for that. Something
about the shuffling gait, an awkwardness where a different personality
might have found pride. And where the naturally extrovert would
have revelled in the ambient roll of the shoulders, or in possession of
the huge, broad back, that mien continued to elude Trevor.

At school the best he could hope for was some kind of Erkan Must-
tafa status, Grange Hill's Row-land born again as Essex soulboy, the
froster memories of daytime TV consigned to a footnote; though if
memory served correctly, Roland had his backers, too, the bookish black
girl or sometimes even a member of staff on hand to lend a sympathetic
ear. So if he was a little adrift, unlike Trevor, he was never totally at sea.

A good deal of Trevor's problems stemmed from the presence of
another fat kid in his class. Chris Papadopoulos, or Chrissy P as he
insisted on being called. And though Trevor hated to admit it, even
now, Chrissy P was entirely the wrong kind of fatty. The sort to take
your lunch money then sit on your head if you complained. Always the
first to put the boot in too. Quick off the mark with the verbs, some
Asian kid usually getting it in the neck — 'Paki this and Paki that' —
the suspicion nonetheless lingering that the bubble was trying extra
table to prove a point to the English boys who'd sometimes tease him
about his olive skin and his mum's hairy arms.

But in another way, Trevor understood. There always had to be
someone lower down in the food chain.

The English boys had Chris. And Chris had the Asian kid. And
he doubtless had someone too, or if not a pet hamster, or something,
out of school. It was just how things were, how they'd probably always
been. Not for him to question; just another detail to survive. He knew
he stood out anyway, the only jock in a class full of cockneys. Then
again he'd always stood out. And it wasn't as though he could just
hide away, blend his fourteen stone into the décor.