

THE SWEET SHOP

Her children were borrowed.
Each day, after school, the shop bell jangled
and for ten minutes her front room was
filled with laughter. Child after child
pointing chalky fingers at the sight of
glass jars, promising hidden delights,
standing to attention on wooden shelves.
Smells of syrup and strawberries mingled
with dust as boys and girls tingled when
sherbet dips hit lips. Love Hearts and Violets
squashed together in the "tupenny drawer"
fruit salad chews and Bobos in the ha'penny one.
Coconut ice, Spanish Gold, liquorice, were lit
by the sun that streamed through onto
faded carpet where faded dreams of family
became reality for ten minutes every day.

Maggie Doyle
November 2016.