

Suspect

A coronet

1

Suspected capable of hijacking
a plane and forcing it somewhere unknown,
I suggest El Dorado, Carrick
or Illyria as destinations.

2

Destined to skim over a crimson
lake at Aldergrove, we touch down
by an olive-green field of lop-
eared army helicopters.

3

A helicopter lifts, peels off on a run
and hangs, pinnacled on a cone of light
as if it held the sun
prisoner inside.

4

Inside a gob of phlegm, outside
a twirled spire of finest porcelain,
a snail with cabinet swaying
sets off to cross the high road.

5

The road is shut, blocked by a force
of bunched police. The sun ricochets
off riot shields, and bystanders
not blinded are suspect.

The Unavoidable

Ahead is a gold girdered toll bridge
held by angels. I hold fire until
I see the blues of their eyes.
The rear-view mirror returns them to history.
What was isn't, is not. No way.
What is is a back seat schoolgirl
being drunk. And singing, perhaps the lullaby:
Little bugger, like your father, always the
loser, the wild goose chaser. She prods
the baby's crinkled face with her breast.
Give a goose a bad name. Admittedly
five wild geese, in flight from Irish winter
to Russian spring, crash land in surf,
stretching their legs and unbuttoning downy waistcoats.
A traffic flash intervenes in the crooning
of John Dowland by Frank Snatter, to
say that after a crashing of cars
the A16 has been swabbed down and
is flowing freely again, pickling the planet.
Accidents are unavoidable. Any disagreement with me
is a mechanical fault in the universe, and
also unavoidable. However. Late last year scientists
discovered the secret law that explains everything
but on Sunday morning the lawbreakers entered
and broke every law they could find.
My secrets are safe in the briefcase
with the combination lock I can't open
without the specs locked in the briefcase.
Happiness is a chemical imbalance in the
brain triggered by these tranquillity pills, tested
to destruction on laboratory rats, whose happiness
is quite depressing, as is the discovery
of how overjoyed they are at being
rats, and how ready to accept needles
and cages (but why not take a

tranquillity pill and then read this again).
A bald man waits for the barber's
to open, or his hair to grow.
The sanded edge of the land is
both light and dark, sea wetted or
sun dried, café noir or au lait,
and the greylag geese by the boating
lake paddle around both summer and winter
in pink plastic flippers demanding fair shares,
and getting them, with loaves of sympathy.
Their long-haul migration has become history.
A ship balanced on the horizon topples
over, men shouting "Women first", women crying
"Men", coming to blows, all drowning together.
Your guardian angel has a broken wing.
This is unavoidable. What was is not.
What is are a baby's reproachful cries,
and a schoolgirl opening a door into
the dark and feeling for the switch
where a switch will be when there
is a light, which there is not.