

Guru

People
on the street
seem to like
asking me questions.

I must have a trustable
face.

Sometimes
they thank me
for giving them
wrong directions.

What I Remember of Edinburgh

Cobblestones

smell of pot

chocolate soup

crust of dreadlock

coffees before work

absinthe at poetry parties

falling asleep in class again

combined scent of piss
and yeast

a hallway filled with Spanish students
drinking red wine and coca-cola

unscrupulously sampling
the local boys

underground pubs with dripping ceilings

my best friend with his
heavy metal hair
and undying love

climbing up Arthur's Seat to be met
with the windy town's view

a street called Cockburn
my own little heart death

a kind of slavish desperation
and finally, finally

the knowledge that it's time to go home.

The Night Does Not Creep

The night does not creep;
it is not a cat, but a blundering whale,
or a tumbling, deep-sea octopus. Awkwardly
getting caught. Tentacles fastening onto telegraph poles
as it floats past. Suburb after suburb,
each coral-coloured house, the same as the last.
Sometimes, blind, it stumbles and makes apologies
to the homes (for bumping into their brick bodies).
“I’m sorry, I didn’t see you there, your second storey
protruding so high into the air. I thought you were a fish,
I thought you were a mermaid.” In embarrassment,
its ink would release, spreading across the atmosphere
like blue blood. Like oil across a road where a cat
once sat and mewed at the moon; a fluorescent sponge,
soaking in a starfish sky.

Love Poem for London

for J.T.

Two in The Eye overlooking London's lights
One hand in mine strolling through Soho's night

Eating tart in Camden Town
In a construction site while it poured down

"It never rains in London but just in case that's a lie
We must be all business all the time"

We cannot be stuck without a bus
With only top-hats to guide us

Yesterday I retraced Hugh Grant's steps
Essence of celebrity scattered through Portobello markets

Circling the channel between friend and lover
I say goodbye to one, wait in the rain for the other

Finding inspiration in Hockney's lines and colours
Nosebleed seats to watch a masked man with binoculars

Hours filled with mythology, gods I should know but don't
Arguments over comics, things we could say but won't.

Refrigerator Romance

O capsicum,
How your luscious skin
Shines under fluorescent light!
Capsicum how your bulges entice me!
I've never seen a buttock so beautiful
As your own tripartite behind
Your flower-like face
A cheery poppy
The central green life-duct
From which you were plucked
A reminder of your mortality
The fleeting ripeness of your sweet juices
Into which I yearn to melt!
O capsicum, marry me!
I have been watching you from two floors up
Spying your position in the veggie crisper
How I long to spread myself on top of you
My heart-coloured rose!
If you return my affections
So sincerely demonstrated
Please say you'll be mine
Till your plump flesh withers
Till the seedlings inside you turn to rot
I cannot imagine a life without you
Capsicum, do not forsake me!