

Transient flesh and the buds of death
bloom on mercator window-panes, rippled
in convex heat, off on the dark road
of the shivering heart of ugliness
for the soft glimpse of cragged basins
of the south where porpoises gnash
water, blind fists whacking the shimmered
plate of sea unblinking, melting
into mirrors like that abstract desolation,
for months that ogle each other,
wondering but knowing how it will stop
in that creased night of chance
when the mice will leap and dance.

He walks across the road and sees his distorted reflection in a shop-front window. As with all grotesqueries, the tenor of his thoughts turns toward the pastoral and the eternally returning wake of cyclical death and heat. At this juncture comes the realisation that thoughts leading from each other and about each other have a morbidity that can only be resolved by an awkward humour that never fails to value the importance of stupidity as a guiding principle at all the critical cusps of life. Consequently, when he returns home, instead of writing he plays a mindless computer game.

Borne up and strewn with petals of decay,
their fleshy odour mourning the slow passage
through the dying day,
scattered by the failing breeze,
tottering from side to side,
carried by weak, sunburnt hands
to that narrow bower where the thin trees hum
and camellias lie bruised in falling light,
soft onto that mound where the cool grass spreads
and the ants already with their furtive gifts
begin their slow campaign, enveloped in
that cloudless afternoon, their frail embrace
about those hollow sockets in that grim face.

The death of yet another chance to snatch motivation from the jaws of sloth proves to be the inspiration for a reverie concerning the cinematic ritual and sensuality of a hero's death. Of course, he is his own hero, fighting virtual demons in the hope that he may get his dignity back, or at least an ideal free lunch. As is to be expected, closure proves elusive and death less than final: yet again the computer has defeated him. Inexorably, his thoughts turn to love.

A somersault in time, beyond the need
again to find another soul, instead
the intimacy of fingernails, the solitude
of tea. The cardboard cut-out past
has filled and floated free above
warm bricks cooling in deluded
afternoons, unashamedly, transparently,
in jars and clothes and love-sick cupboards,
whining in unsung songs and swathed
on the carpet. How you would like
to dance in the clandestine room
with alabaster ceilings and unguent
mood music piped in subtle waves
and the ways of the world nowhere to be seen.

His first love, as he recalls less and less frequently, was a somewhat confused individual who agonised over a period of years between suffering a father for her child and freely following the callings of desire. Eventually she chose the latter, more out of tiredness and anger than actual fear. Life is such... but the different dimensions of remembered and anticipated love strike him as curiously antithetical: as he buys a sausage roll for lunch he is buoyed by the rich hope the future holds, while at the same time the love he lived gnaws at the back of his head like Ugolino.

Caught in the static thrill where waves repeating
roll through black afternoons, the clouds a cascade
of chance, spreading with needled lightning, lifting
the curtains on secret pleasures and pain
as if the wind did not remember blowing on that
hollow loss: a small girl lifting herself
up out of the bath, her fledgling hair
slicked back and ringlets of steam abundant.
But the brilliance of 'now' shines like
suns breaking through dismal clouds;
the chill remains, the awful recollections
of beauty somehow still forever bursting
fresh on splendid wet roads, glistening
trees and raindrops laughing down, just once.

Later in the afternoon a storm begins to break and the tempest outside matches his own inner turmoil (clichés, like insecurities, abound). As therapy he tries to write a poem, but cannot get beyond the image of a string of sausages. Instead, memories of unhappiness abound: his 'daughter' whom he has not seen for years and who probably no longer remembers him, but whom he loved more than he cares to express – the joke, of course, being that despite his heartbreak she is not even properly 'his', that biological boast. The usual restlessness strikes, and he has no choice but to wander outdoors for a while.