

Dedication

Anne Clark

In broad daylight
And a familiar street
The kind where gossips dawdle
And nose-to-tail dogs meet

Some bastard with no face lurched out
From behind a tree
And tried to kill me

There was tooth flash
Black leather
The smile of a knife
And I saw the terrified
Puffed out bird of my life
Fly from my hand
So for a long second I knew I was dead
Even though I was still fighting him off
Even though I just said 'no, no'
and then in a flurried muddle
go on
go on
Meaning all I most wanted to do in the world
Had hardly begone
Before my heart started working again
And I stood there alone
Dribbling a little thin blood from one finger
Onto a ringing paving stone

I thought that was it
But then night fell
And the knife became an adder's tongue
Bitterly licking me
Slicing easily
Stripping the brain from my open head
Until all I'd begone, half finished or done
Or wished to be true, was gone
All except you

But you were asleep and made no sound
When I left your side without a word
And slipped downstairs to my room underground
A grown up, like a frightened child

The fire is out at the heart of the world
All tame creatures have grown up wild

The lives I trusted, even my own
collapse, break off, or don't belong
I laid my head on the window pane
And the hard edged garden lit with rain
Shimmering a million knives
The wind caressed them with its painful hand

The fire is out at the heart of the world
All tame creatures have grown up wild
All except you, your life like a cloud
I am lost in now, and shall never be found