

## in the space between

the pillow wears the round indent of your absent head

you have walked out on me many times  
always I was at the door waiting when

a long time later  
you would come back

I have one foot on the grass  
one on the carpet beside our bed

somewhere in the space between  
is where I spend my nights

listening to the distant city exhaling  
its citizens to the suburbs

to here  
where we live

this morning I awoke in a warm bed  
turned to inhale your sweet breath

took hold of your hand and squeezed it  
opened my eyes to find myself alone

you read me like I read the clouds  
but better

you know me as I know you  
but better

you leave me as you always leave me

## red clock

now that it's all settled  
I can hear that red clock's second hand  
edge relentlessly forward

all else is quiet  
too quiet

the large unslept in bed  
invites no one in but the cold  
a cold that finds its way  
to where her icy feet lay in wait

over there, the old radio she never used  
and here, above where I lie  
the mould on the walls encroaching still,  
the odour of paint that never fades

there were other invisible things  
that couldn't be kept at bay,  
one in particular haunting every room  
we lived in, even this one  
where the red clock ticks and the light of the day  
retreats into a deathly gloom

a cold silence creeps down my back  
fastens me to the pale wall forever

## cargo

we're in the slipstream of your fear  
a fear that fouls the wind tunnel  
of these high hedges shadowing  
mean northern roads

we shut the windows  
the stench would turn a cast-iron gut –  
worse, the sleeping child will wake  
with questions we cannot answer

your journey has just begun  
across endless motorways  
and seas that dip and rise  
to the camouflaged slaughterhouses

of Cairo and Metz and Gdansk –  
there will be the usual welcoming party  
as you stumble down the ramp  
a greeting undreamed of

as you grazed the soft meadows  
over dark northern bogs