

Peripheral Vision

I

Not everyone sees it, but I glimpsed the man
inside our terrier. We'd walked up the lane,
he stood back, a second, to let me in

through the gate, so courtly that, on my inner eye,
I saw him for the first time clearly
not a dog but a dish dressed in soft chamois,

tall like a prince, with thigh-length boots.
I said I would marry him. Sepia street lights
were our veil as, with love, I opened the locks

to our royal dwelling. Then, back on all fours,
he was wagging his tail by the kitchen door.
Beauty hides in the beast. This is the law.

II *The gods still walk around South Wales*

Caught in a traffic jam outside the Monico
cinema, a girl called idly on Apollo,
not meaning it. A stranger steps in. 'We'll go

up to the Beacons,' he said. 'I am
the answer to your prayers, a dangerous man,
not *deus ex machina* but lunatic in van.'

So she drove, directed by his Stanley knife,
fearing now for her hairdresser life
on B roads, till he'd ravished her enough

in lay-bys, near beauty-spot streams
to satisfy her kidnap dreams.

They say she made it all up. But how come

her joy, despite all the names she was called
by hacks and her neighbours? How come she recalled
such transport of love, a shower of gold?

II *History Lesson*

Time was they walked on water dry
so full of ships were the teeming docks.
We dream in video what they lived by day.

Masts bobbed like crosses at a crowded quay,
sank from sight inside the gurgling lock.
Time was they walked on water dry.

Men had to travel for a fireman's pay,
they sweated bullets but enjoyed the crack.
We dream in video what they lived by day.

Murmansk, Osaka, Paraguay:
the girls they met there call them back...
Time was they walked on water dry,

met Welshmen everywhere, and lay
by stanchions up some Godforsaken creeks.
We dream in video what they lived by day.

Back home in Cardiff, hear the halcyons play
sweet music when the winds fall slack.
Time was they walked on water dry.
We dream in video what they lived by day.

III *Website Future*

No need for me once we're on the net,
are a wave to be surfed on, have gone world-wide.
No awkward engines to curate
but templates which never knew a tide.

And if TV signals are never lost
but flare round the world until a mind
receives them, then surely this e-mail will last
much longer than paper. Fast-forward, rewind

are history. Let the servers serve
their megabyte karma in encoded air.
Long live the roll of the mouse, the curve
of choices made when I won't be here.

Then nobody'll tell us where we've just been
but we'll make our own history, piece by piece,
be free to improvise and glean
our version, far from chronicle police.

But on monitors the bands of rain
sweep in, interference on our charts.
Remember the real matters more than the known.
Unforecast snow falls softly in our hearts.