

3 a.m.

Those nights when sleep leaves you stranded,
a sand-bound hulk on the bed
of a long gone sea.

Heavy-lidded, flannel-headed,
straining for familiar sounds,
a scutter of rain, the ruffle of wind.

Outside, over Cumbrae
distant house lights blink and tremble,
dance through drifting veils.
Inside a silent presence of machines,
garnet in the dark,
an amber eye on the skirting.

Unkempt thoughts,
their tangled skeins,
searching loose ends
among the wind-snagged rigging.

To sink and watch
the hulls of passing ships,
keeled and barnacled.

And later, a wandering absence of light
against the star-pinned dark.