

1. BAXTER

22 OCTOBER 1972,
21 TIRI TIRI ROAD:
A LAST PHOTOGRAPH.
BAXTER STANDS WITH
JEAN TUWHARE,
BOTH LAUGHING INTO
THE SUN,
SPRING MORNING
ON A LAWN WITH
YOUNG FRUIT TREES.
544 GLENFIELD ROAD:
THAT NIGHT THE
DOOR OPENED
AND
SOMETHING
FELL IN.
SOMEONE
BLOTTED OUT.
LIGHT, DARK ,
LIGHT, DARK, LIGHT,
DARK, LIGHT,
DARK,
LIGHT, DARK, LIGHT,
LIGHT, DARK,
DARK,
DARK,
DARK,
DARK.

A WOMAN AT
THE BUS STOP
WATCHES ME PHOTOGRAPH
THE OVERGROWN
LETTERBOX
OF THE HOUSE WHERE
THE POET DIED.
I CLIMB THE STEPS
TO THE ROADWAY
AND CROSS
AT THE LIGHTS,
BUY A PLUM
FROM THE
KOREAN GREENGROCER.
TAKEAWAY;
SUSHI BAR;
LAUNDROMAT.
PLACES WITH
NO PROVENANCE.
ORDINARY LIFE,
THE GERM OF
SOMEWHERE ELSE
IN US,
EVERYWHERE.

WALKING PAST
THE CHURCH
ITS SIGN READS:

LENT

THIS WEEK

EXPECT NEW LIFE.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS
ARE STRUNG ALONG
THE RIDGE ROAD .
JERUSALEM,
BUILT HERE.
A HOLY FRANCHISE
OPEN IN EVERY CITY.
HANDS IN PRAYER,
BLOTTED,
PRESSED TOGETHER,
I FOLLOW
THE BAREFOOT POET.

2. GOTINGCO

CLAY,
FULL OF WATER,
BREATHING WITH THE YEAR.
SWELLING,
SHRINKING,
TWISTING THE BUILDINGS
ON ITS HAUNCHES.
GAPPY SUBURBIA.
THE SOIL IS SLOW,
THE PLANTS BLOOM LATE.
AT NIGHT THERE ARE DARK
POOLS BETWEEN THE
ORANGE STREETLIGHTS.
DOWN BY THE HARBOUR
THE CLIFFS WEEP,
AND CRUMBLING,
SHRUG THE MANSIONS ON
THEIR SHOULDERS
DOWN INTO THE WATER.

SOME,
SOMETHING,
SOMETHING IS HAPPENING.
BLOOD IN THE SOIL,
ON THE PAVEMENT.
THE SOUND OF
ROTOR BLADES
BRINGS ME OUT
INTO THE ROADWAY.
SHADOWS OF PASSING CARS
PUNCH SWIFT HOLES
IN THE AUTUMN SUNSHINE.
IN THE GRAVEYARD
BEHIND THE RIDGELINE,
A BLUE TENT
BEHIND A LINE OF
POLICE TAPE.

A SHOE IN THE ROAD.
THE PHONE
YOUR CHILDREN GAVE YOU,
CALLING FROM THE VERGE.
COME HOME,
YOU.
EVEN MORE BLAMELESS
THAN EVERY
BLAMELESS VICTIM.
A PRIMER IN
GOOD AND
EVIL.

IN SPRING
I TAKE THE CHILDREN
TO PLANT TREES
IN THE GRAVEYARD,
PRAYING FOR YOU
UNDER MY BREATH.
IN THE WEEDY GULLY
WHERE WE ARE SENT
WITH OUR SEEDLINGS
THE HEADSTONES
LEAN AND TILT.
WE DIG INTO THE CLAY
AND I FEAR
HITTING BONE.
MY SPADE SHATTERS
SOMETHING WHITE
AND BRITTLE –
ONLY THE NECK OF
A PLASTIC BOTTLE
BOUND IN DIRT.

4. ESKDALE ROAD

IN THE GRAVEYARD
IS A WOODEN MARKER.
WHEN IT RAINS
THE OLD TIMBER GLOWS
FUNGAL RED AGAINST
THE DOUR HEADSTONES.
THE WIDOW LEFT LONDON
WITH HER CHILDREN.
SAILED ACROSS THE WORLD.
LANDED WHEN THE CITY
WAS STILL A
BARRACKS TOWN.
1888.
A DAUGHTER SOMEHOW
CAME TO REST HERE –
ELIZA,
ELIZABETH.
HER BROTHER'S
FAMOUS PAINTINGS,
FULL OF
COLONIAL ROMANCE:
PINK AND WHITE TERRACES,
GREAT KAURI.
HE PAINTED THAT RIVER.
PASSED BY HIRUHARAMA,
RANANA ,
ATENE,
MIRRORS OF ANCIENT CITIES
PLANTED IN THE PAPA.
BANKS SLICK AS GLASS
IN THE RAIN.

ACROSS THE ROAD
FROM THE GRAVEYARD
THERE IS A
RED BRICK WALL.
FIXED NOW,
BUT I REMEMBER
THE BRICKS HEAPED UP
ROUND A RAGGED GAP
FILLED WITH CANDLES
AND FLOWERS.
SOME BOY
CRASHED HIS CAR,
DIED HERE TOO.
WRITTEN IN WHITE ON
THE NEW BRICKS,
FADED,
BUT STILL LEGIBLE:

BABY
WISH YOU COULD
SEE OUR GIRL NOW
SHE'S SO MUCH
LIKE YOU.
LOVE YOU ALWAYS.

AUTUMN AFTERNOON,
MY BABY AND I
PASSING TIME
ON THE ROUGH LAWN
BETWEEN THE STONES.
WALKING ON
WE WATCH A GIRL
IN A BARE CIRCLE
TRAINING A
HORSE ON A ROPE.
OUT WEST,
A GREY PLANE
TAKING OFF
FROM THE AIRFIELD
ACROSS THE WATER
CATCHES THE SUN
ON ITS WING.
ON ESKDALE ROAD
THE TRAFFIC KEEPS
HISSING BY:
DOWNHILL,
UPHILL,
DOWNHILL.
CARS WASH PAST,
DRIVING,
DRIFTING,
PASSING THROUGH
THIS CITY
UNDER ASPHALT,
BEHIND GLASS.