LEAF FLURRY TRAM

On Dandenong Road the white tram throws up the autumn leaves to not-quite window height.

Those inside are unaware of what beauty follows them—leaves from the track dancing up in the passing current of air and staying suspended until the eddy moves on and fresh (dried) leaves take their turn to levitate for this great wizard the East Brighton tram on its way to University white as a bride with a veil billowing in the speed of passage the tracks that lead to a bliss not in front of us but behind, a double blessing, made more beautiful because we don’t see it.

BLOSSOMS, MARSHMALLOWS

Through the blue glass stoppered bottle the pink and white marshmallows have the look of blossoms under water.

The blue glass creates an illusion of soft and yielding sweetness carelessly piled up like little logs cut into rounds. The real blossoms have a similar compactness: they turn inward in the triumph of being born.
THE CHIPPEP LIMOGES PLATE

Because of the chip that mars its border
a midday sandwich can sit on it, a pear
or a slice of cheese, several cream crackers
and I can eat off it happily, aristocratically.

It is the advantage of chipping and flaws:
the beautiful damaged thing, adored
undoubtedly by someone who dropped it, swore,
took it to their room, placed on it

their fake pearls, their insignificant jewels,
hair clips, a chocolate wrapped in foil

and from it took, not just the border
in darkest gold-encrusted maroon

but the Fragonard romance at its heart
of male and female bringing flowers.

WHEN TO VISIT A CEMETERY

Fog is a good time. Showers that turn
to hailstones. Lightning if you can time it.
Thunder passing over the graves.

To see a funeral in extremis: the guard
of honour (some sporting achievement) under
ranks of dripping umbrellas or

the circle of mourners I once saw
in a great ring of linked arms
a bagpiper in the centre, piping

a dirge that escaped the palisade
of their bodies and sang across
all the stones, all the listening sleepers.
GOVERNESS SKY

A grey sky like a governess
in a calf-length coat
and a skirt longer than that.

A day when clichés might be spoken
with the kindliest of intentions
and passed to the listener with gloves

and no response needed. The grey sky
the grey governess with the grey gloves
doing all the talking.

ST FRANCES OF ROME,
PATRONESS OF CAR DRIVERS

Her guardian angel preceded her
casting dipped and full beams
of blue light before her feet.
A guardian angel as an usherette.

Did this angel ever turn and gaze at Frances?
Unnecessary. A life straight as a street
a field of grasses bowing to her
carrying a charity basket like a little car engine.
**HOW TO RELEASE A BEE**

Take a glass tumbler and hold it against the window and over the body of the bumblebee which is flailing and buzzing with a drone of despair rising ever higher.

At first the wailing song continues close to the glass but there is a chamber the bee will soon, with a little shake, descend to. Over the mouth of the tumbler quickly slip a letter from the Inland Revenue Department or something equally importunate and official then, with your palm firmly pressed over the letter, push open the window with your free hand to release the bee whose singing will instantly cease. Now turn on the concert programme and out soars the high C of Allegri’s *Miserere*.

**THE EYE IS BADLY DESIGNED**

The closed eye is gone under the lid like the moon sliding under the sea.

Open it and it slides down like someone sliding down the balustrade of a stair.

It makes thinking odd that the slide must come before the look and how can it be wise to disappear inside your own head leaving a blank screen?

The afternoon doze, the night’s sleep, write: I am no longer here and vacate the scene.

Slip away and slide back, how quickly we land back at the scene, on our feet.