

The birds, they're sleeping

and so am I
and I

entered through doors that swung back
on themselves from behind the
man who did not think to
hold them.

Catching up, I overhead
what is expected of me, here
picked up a leaflet and said

nothing at all.

Starting again, I smiled to the clerk
nodded and did not look
ungrateful

through the second doors, this time
careful on my part to fall behind.

Vibrant monstrosity confronted me, then
and I could taste what had once
churned in my stomach.

Meeting my gaze
upon the ground
stood a bright, odd pair of shoes
wearing hats, like people do
of knitted lambswool

and a skull
– one skull, one head, one
looking without eyes

too many eyes
or, hands where eyes should be

and I scream
scream without screaming

scream surrounded
scream alone

until I see another mind
until it cries
in a cascade of primary tears

bleeding down and bleeding out

looking at me, through me
– I cannot help

chewing nails and crossing limbs
as a small rock strikes again

gently,
deliberately,
repeatedly wearing away

the skull and its integrity
just enough until
it was too much until
it shatters

– I move on

greeted first by moonlight
and candlelight
and drones

of whispers, hums and echoes
filling narrow corridors.

A silhouette hangs, swaying
 behind a staggered X

cut with clanging clockwork
cogs, cold and blue as
grief.

Families like ours look out
from open, looping windows
to stony views of statue limbs
nailed to walls next door

– hard to touch, they're hard to clean

where I escape
 till I reside

 inside a blackness without night

breathing in the quiet
safe and soon could
stay forever.

There is music from behind
the strings,
 steps towards forever

watching someone
 not unlike me

pause by blurred horizons.

It is magic
calm, uneasy
rolling like low tide.

I think this is my favourite bench,
curious and particular...

I lose time till there is change
and I am joined by someone new
who is less serene,
more hurried than myself.

I lay down with churning jingles
and doze until I'm shot
by a man in green who

danced like ghosts
tumbling through barred windows.

Can't you see
the man on fire,

see the boy who does not burn?

Hear the sound of sighs
resounding

beating mallet to a drum?

Voices call here without speaking, Ma
Listen, they dissolve

and it continues
it continues
and i -