

## **Time Piece**

**She is not yet aged or ravaged  
yet a cave of loss is weathering within her.  
A parking metre clicks down, its red analogue  
sinks like an abrupt sunset.  
A voucher machine counts down to zero.  
Traffic lights blink, green, orange, red.  
Her bus departs, and today's rush is lost  
ineluctably.**

**She is sitting, hearing, watching passing seconds,  
the whir and tick of minutes,  
the ponderous tocking of the hours.  
Perhaps, she thinks, at birth her life was hitched to cogs  
to be bullied along narrow pathways  
on a steady one-way passage to Eternity.**

**Ledlights flash. On off. Off on,  
measuring Time from nano-seconds to celestial orbits.**

**She knows Time's fickle shapeshifting,  
how its arrows can bend, snap or twist and at any moment  
become an earthquake seismograph  
or a double helix of mating snakes,  
where Past and Present intercoil  
to create the menace of the Future.**

Sometimes she wants to sing alive the joys of Time,  
her hair blown wild with expectation;  
other times she wants to stare it down,  
stop its cruel and careless ingress,  
make it shunt backwards through her life  
so she can slip inside her younger skin,  
inhale again the scent of sleeping infant  
and hold him intensely in the now.

She is finding other ways of being in Time,  
reading its passage in seasons,  
deaths and birthings,  
heartbeats, breaths and menses,  
in the swell and shrink of shadows,  
dawns and sunsets; in the rhythms  
of the moon and ocean tides.

Her eyes are sundials from sunnier  
yet more shadowy times;  
her retinas reflect the flames of candles  
calibrated to mark the passing of the hours;  
her irises are cross-sections of living trees,  
inheritances from both parents  
which will, one day, embed her in their rings,  
binding her to her ancestors,  
and the descendants of her son.