

GYAUN AFF

Half past six i'da moarnin,
an da ebb at da crack o dawn
is a world ah'm never seen.
herdly a cheep or a pleep,
or a sowl ta be seen
frae da world at sleeps
ta disturb da mirror flat caulm o da voe,
not even a pirr o wind;
just a queer wheesht,
an here I im
staundin at da noost riggitt an ready
in a dopey shiver frae bangin oot o bed
wi a belly girnin fur a brackfist I wis faert ta aet.
fur he said half past six
an I wisna goin ta be a meenit late
in case he wis waitin on amp
an set aff laek a ferry on da dot
ta laeve me sittin wi my Cornflakes.

An da ebb, wi da unsettlin quiet,
grips me as someteen watchin an ready ta pounce.
As imagination runs riot dere on my ain
ah'm aaready tinkin ta laeve dis cruel sea,
or at laest keep im a safe distance ahint,
whaur I can mak da hoose, need be,
wi an aisy sprint,
bit I turn me ageen fur da sea
wi aa da pluck o Christopher Columbus,
fur here he comes noo
platchin doon da park
wi a flask o coffee
an a creeshy bottle o fuel
siphoned frae da Hillman Imp,
an ah'm hoppin he'll understaund
at da lifejacket in my haund
is een o yon things at a midder maks you wear,
laek short breeks i'da simmer,
an a parka i'da winter.
An if a lifejacket isna sheem enyoch
der's also da bottle o juice,
an da tub o chocolate biscuits an sandwiches,
made by a midder at canna tell da difference
atween a boy goin ta sea
an a bairn gyaun on a picnic.

He lodds up da flattyy wi twartree creels
an da vyldest box o bait
oomin wi blue-bottles

an oagin wi lice.

My first taest o da sea,
which hings da rest o da day on my cuff
is da grim guff
frae da sluttery soor sly an guttery gub
o muck-rotten piltocks.
An fur a boy at braggit
tae box da compass backwirds,
yitter in Morse laek a wireless
an sweem 500 lents o da pool,
da first cruel lesson
o guid seamanship learned
is kiltin up da sleeves
afore gyaun near da stuff.
An we rowe aff tae da mooreens
wi da *snyeek, snyeek*, snyirks
o da oars on da thole pins
at cerry's across da still o da voe.

Bit da glessy dwaum, serenely caulm
an da lazy paece o da moarneen,
is shune rivven in sindry an shattered,
bi a deemon on da watter
leeshin at da motor
wi da turns o da crankin haundle
an da lifeless *whug-a-whug-a-whug* o a flywheel
'at brings up wi a boonce
ithoot da fart o a spark
till he lowsies wi a swaerin,
caain da Stuart Turner
fur aa da temperamental dirty bitches
an lowsy whoors o hell.

Hit shocks me ta discover
'at a man o his age
keens dis wirds!
Bit he curses an reenks at da motor
till shu finally fires wi a keek
an a splutter o shots,
tröttles intae gaer wi a daevnin knock
a guidless vimmer an shak
an a boal o reek,
an ah'm gyaun aff!

Yaeh, an ah'm gyaun aff
wi a good grundin
o da things at happen at sea
at's no fur a midder's lugs,
whedder it be aa da lowsy whoors o hell

or a lifejacket left lyin i'da forepeak.