

In her brown vinyl shopping bag

five pounds of reds and a handful of carrots,
gift-wrapped in Sunday's *News of the World*

sandwiches to feed an army,
a half-eaten lipstick
toilet roll and sick bag,
just in case,

her full quota of library books,
the Flying Doctor murmuring,
Don't you know I love you, you little fool,
to the girl in a coma

a torn copy of *Waiting for Godot*,
so she can help me with my exams,

a Murray Mint rolled in fluff

her life spilling its guts
through a broken zip

Welsh Misery

You watch stars skulk at
the edge of a holiday
window and lights flinch

on the opposite
shore. When the tide turns, rain starts
up its snivelling

and you are six years
old once more, dwarfed by cases
packed in the hallway:

*are you stopping with
me or going with her?* How
such misery grips.

You sleep with night pressed
into your eyes and the sound
of its thin grizzling.

On the Canal

Moored narrow boats.
names across their flanks:

*Old Badger, Dreamcatcher,
Scarweather, Leaping Sky, Inkie and I.*

tethered to the slow-motion and the outline
of me floating to nowhere on the water.

Later, a working blue-top hauls
its low sling of coal, coke, anthracite

over the horizon's shoulder and
Jimmy Macc, hey Jimmy,

*oh Jimmy Macc,
when are you coming back,*

leans into the slack,

upstream.