

and the only surprise
in twilight breaths
is silence.

the dance

When you camber this time
into tin, echoing our levers,
your limbs have the bronze

of an early sun. Your Aztecs mock
camembert and dessert:
after drums, near the Maid

of Justice, a placed pot
shatters, and its tree
sags like a lanced horse oozing

sap. These are figures,
in bow, to dapple the tacit
street lamps into season.

STELLA TURNER

WEEKEND IN ENGLAND WITH STRANGERS

Our hosts retired for afternoon naps.
We sat upstairs in the silent house, reading
waiting for the time to pass
until another cup of tea with
awkward conversation
marked the passing of two more hours . . .
still twenty-four before our flight.

The windows opened
onto the most English of English
summer gardens. Walled
green lawns glanced by swallows

curved around rich garden beds, overflowing
roses, lavender and pink astilbe;
commoners, like briar rose and meadowsweet
grew wild
on the other side of the well-clipped hedge.
A thin cool voice had observed that
swallows glancing were a sign of rain.

Overhead
black clouds — clouds like breaking waves
pushed towards the sun.
'It will probably come to nothing' we said;
We felt threatened all the same.

TESS WROE

NELLIE

Facing seaward at the end of the wooden ramp
Hair flicked backward by the wind
She stood with all the knowledge of her full
two years
And took her time in coming to conclusions.
Then turned and skipped back to me
As I held my breath and waited
Knowing if I reached for her
I might just as well put side rails up
And pretend to confine
Her rollicking defiance
Feel her fight my hold and fling
Resentment at the slats
Mutinous marionette
Refusing to drown
Without water.