

VII.

It takes so much, and stops.
Tacticians estimate the need for leave.
The hotel-keepers calculate the thirst.

VIII.

The cool and louvred light intrudes
on nightmare, the silent scream
in the hurt head roars across
the bungalow suburbs, the rest homes
and convalescent wards laid down
pawns to pride. The volunteer ladies
come at ten; they are frightened
of dawn, the day's cold eye
open on ulcer and flesh, amputee
and bedpan. They will hold hand,
write letters, generally satisfy
the good intentions of the world.
After late lunch, trams and roses
in avenues, to the shawled rooms
waiting for streetlamps, on settees
beside their indifferent phones.

PETER BELL

A MORNING

You have gone, now,
but I trace your path
through
disturbed ducks

(which I still see)

flying.