

## Table For Two on Valentine's Night

maybe we both hoped that  
dressing up and making the effort  
would thaw the ice  
but instead our hurt  
glinted like sharpened knives  
in the flickering candlelight  
and we glared  
at our congealing soup  
and ground our food  
between clenched teeth

and when i tried to ease the tension  
by mentioning my intention  
to stab the loved up couple next to us  
with my fork  
you just stared at me with a look  
that was so fed up of me  
that i tapped and hummed  
swung on my chair  
clinked my rings together  
did all those small, stupid, nervous things  
that once i'd tried so hard to avoid  
because they annoyed you

so we scraped back our chairs  
and left in separate directions  
each without a backward glance  
and i knew then, that that night  
by severing the fraying thread  
that held us together  
Cupid and his arrow  
had turned assassin  
and killed our love stone dead

## Civil Partnerships and All that Jazz

we're getting civvied up  
we're de-mob happy  
the war is through  
we're rushing out  
to say "i do, i do"  
we're very nearly  
just like you  
we're in the suburbs  
with our 4x4s and 2.2  
kids. we go on family trips  
to International Ladies Day

Hey, times have changed  
we've won the right  
to become racist thugs in blue  
to butch it up in prisons  
swing our keys  
clank our chains  
join the army  
we're in the main  
stream now  
we're getting carried away  
we're celebrating this freedom we've found  
with our beautiful, shiny, pink pound  
we're pushing out the boat  
we're afloat at last

are we fuck! we're all at sea  
because this isn't a war that we won  
we just crossed over to the enemy

## Arran

because both birds and whales sing  
i lie down and let you run through me  
because both birds and whales  
i lie down and let you run  
through me you sing with  
anarchy in your face  
my eyes flicker like  
side show freaks  
and eclipse the setting sun  
your anarchy enfolds me  
a storm blue sky  
where i migrate  
to shaking winds  
to pods of whales  
to fleeting birds  
to me

## Angel of Anarchy

(Francesca Woodman Photograph – Untitled, Rome, Italy 1977 – 1978)

i've taken this space  
the apron's gone  
the clean floor mine for once  
i'm jesu am i  
or a suicide  
it's not for you to decide  
i'm not nailed up here by your desire  
no sacrificial lamb  
strong, i hang by my fingers  
head to one side  
you think i'm dead, or depressed  
you're wrong  
i'm a bird on a branch  
an acrobat, a free diver  
an angel about to take flight

i've thrown my face  
the apron's skirt masks me  
the floor rancid all the time  
am i not satan  
or a birth  
it's for you to divine  
i'm strung up by your apathy  
a blood sacrifice  
weakened, my nails tear  
my head too heavy for my neck  
you think that i'm happy, enjoy this  
i'm a bird in a cage  
petrified, a sinking stone  
an angel without wings

## It's Not Black and White

in my head it's every day  
it happens every day  
in my head  
it won't go away  
i can't make it  
a film playing  
over and over  
as if i didn't care  
as if i could forget  
what i did  
on those days  
all those years ago  
what else can i do  
but think  
shut in here  
what else can i do  
but have the inside of my head  
become a film theatre  
become a cassette player  
those tapes on a constant loop  
that i helped make  
my chickens come home to roost  
there's no shooting them away  
the film playing constantly  
on the back of my eyes  
sleep is no relief  
i dream of it  
the slow drip of blood  
in my head  
my own doing  
my own fault  
as though i could forget  
it's not black and white  
a full colour horror  
flick of my soul  
of what i did  
all those years ago