

Bird

The path at the edge of the wood lets me in;
an uninvited guest
unfamiliar with the etiquette of tree, plant, stone,
this stillness at noon.
Trod twigs crack the calm apart
till sounds soak back into the forest floor.

Fallen from high branches, a new born bird
squats in its new world of bracken and earth.
A gristle of neck, the colour of deep bruising
strains to some unseen safety.
Its beak, yellow as the rind of old cheese
yawns wide.
Red webs of vein, tangled life beneath the skin,
pulse.
The eyes terrify; polished beads of black rain,
unblinking, lock with mine.
Demand to live.