

# The Most Washed SUV on the Templeogue Road

This is paradise, the only time that I truly own:  
This solitary hour when I let my mind drift,

Stuck in the traffic, safe from her “must do” list  
Pinned up in the kitchen with a fridge magnet.

Nobody notices me here as I hum favourite hits,  
Fantasise about female motorists and recollect

The elation of struggling with straps, when girls  
Let me undress them, frill by silky frill, on nights

When I was more constant than any Northern star,  
When evenings brimmed with the possibilities

Of what fate might hold, what doors might open in bedsits,  
Where kisses tasted of lipstick and Benson and Hedges.

Could I have then envisaged being captive in a car at dawn,  
Content inside my prison, happy to be bullied and bossed,

Knowing that without my jailer I would be truly lost?  
She controls time and motion until I strap on my seat belt

At eight a.m. or earlier if I invent reports of gridlock.  
When I arrive home she’ll badger me out to the shed

That needs sorting, the lawn to be trimmed, on her list  
Where life can be ticked off into an ordered happiness.

Sometimes when she bends at the sink I want to lift her dress  
Like that afternoon in her father’s shed in her tennis skirt,

Only now she would tut and give me her “act your age” eyes.  
I don’t want to be my age, I want to sit here and fantasise

About convent girls or curing cancer or scoring tries  
With a packed crowd hysterical in the corner where I lie

Bruised and sore, but ready to hold the ball aloft  
Amid jubilant team mates, with the Triple Crown won,

Cures found for blindness, malaria, middle-age disgruntlement,  
The mystery unsolved of the burglar who stole the fridge magnet,

Struggles with bra clasps at seventeen, fishnet stocking worn  
By a Cavan girl in a Rathgar flat, the illicit taste of woodbines,

A hand under the table in Zavargo’s Nite Club, mysterious rust  
Affecting the tools in the shed, with even the lawn-mower bust,

The garden gone to pot, a power-cut and her whisper: “I’m scared,  
Let’s go to bed by candlelight. With no other heat in our residence

We’ll have to burn my list to stay warm, unless you’ve other ways  
To keep me warm, like on that afternoon I wore a tennis skirt,

And was correcting your pronunciation of ‘Duice’ when you grasped  
Me tight about the waist in the shed amid Daddy’s potting plants.”

That sweetness to which I yielded everything, except my daily fix  
Of simply staring at taillights here, with no boss to supervise

This off-duty hour when I truly exist – midway between my desk  
And henpecked life – the hero in every tale, free to do as he likes.

- Dermot Bolger