

Mileage

Fifteen floors up she sits tight.
Can't give what's already spent.
The housing officer will soon

stop knocking. Universal Credit.
Universal. The Universe.
She can't imagine limitless

space, or choice. The letterbox
snaps and footsteps fade.
She knows the lift's out of order,

but fifteen minutes should do it.
Time for him to take the fifteen
flights of stairs to his car,

write up his notes, his mileage.
Then it'll be safe to hang out
the washing. From that distance

he won't pick her out. From that
distance all the balconies look
the same, like stars in the night sky.