

Number Ten

We meant to leave behind us:
Mum's piano no longer played,
the rocking chair the dog had
worn down, into the ground,
Grandma Lily's china cabinet,
the veneered light-oak table,
war-time issued utility ration,
the iron-framed double bed
in which Dad had been born,
the new bathroom extension
sloping downhill all the way,
glass stockroom with cigarette
cartons, sweets and toffee jars,
which overlooked the tiny yard,
nasturtiums throttled by black fly,
our skeletal, elderly neighbour
given to wandering in the night,
Barrett's shop, furniture-sellers,
who could direct funerals too,
the cemetery and crematorium,
a flower shop, close by, handy
for a spray of decent chrysanthus,
a soot-besmirched gothic church
spiralling high into an empty sky,
bells tolling for the passing trade.

But not Lily's precious trunk in the cellar,
with pewter and chinoiserie, left behind,
but unintended; the new owner adamant
he'd never seen. Denying it'd ever been.