

5.4 Flights of mind (1976)

The unlocked level of the mind
enables us to see
the wafer wall between
the trousered knee
and unfathomable sky.
Or waking to sunlight
our love extends
from the third floor window-frame
to the small and nameless figure
in the door across the street.
Or struck by the wild cry
of some remembered song,
we wonder why
we don't dissolve in open winds
and cast, like Rimbaud,
along the slip-streams of the sky,
leaving all the papers of our life
to sink like white bats
down and out of sight.

And then there is that other kind
of unreality: lens we look through,
see the things that might have been -
the confines of our life
reduced to pass the needle's eye
and thence emerge convex
to let us glimpse
the gardens where we never trod,
our other selves, contingent loves,
that so familiar gate
which beckons us, and mocks us,
but knows full well
we're not yet fit to pass.

Out of Casablanca - 1976.