

Mark Vuaran

Diorama

Sheets of water laminate the windows
as if to reverse
the myth of glass,
but my gaze keeps slipping
to the ghosts which drift behind me,
swaying in a Finnish tango
to the ship's pitch and yaw,
borrowed eyes seeing
some earlier draft of things,
lost in a cold, particulate light.
Is this the drowning which was meant?
My tilt-shift vision
of Prospero's storm:
cellophane sea and scattered
doll-like bodies, their tiny faces
far too clear.
A wave breaks over us like a stage curtain,
and it is last night on the M56,
heading west, somewhere near Chester,
the fog lights catching great dark shoals
of rain, algorithmic complexity
that flexes
and envelops us,
so it seems we barely move at all.
The illusion holds until
a single truck tyre appears,
a sudden coalescence of storm and tar
shuddering down the motorway
to loom as close
and still
as midwinter dawn.
It completes a turn in the air
with slow brute grace,
then passes,
catseyes like bouquets
thrown into the night behind us.

And now, deep in the wilds of the Irish Sea,
the new year is sleeping within
cyclizine dreams,
and I am reminded of yesterday's wonder:
a chorus of whispers painted on
the imprimatura of your skin;
delicate cave magic revealed
by the flickering torch
of a heartbeat.
Over the bow
I can see the evening's
last blue twilight,
pressed between
stormclouds like a flower,
holding for an instant
it trembles

and
vanishes.