

## Stillife

Hiding beneath the table  
while the surgeons watch you sleep,

I steal your breath  
when they give up.

I make a house of you  
and all my brother has forgotten

will fill your rooms.  
All you kept from me

waits inside your body  
like a camera's spent film:

here is my Aunt Mary  
wrapped in a winding sheet

sleepwalking your mother's dream,  
here your father's garden,

its path of broken stone.  
And here is a dress I might have worn,

burst-white flowers round the collar.  
Where have you hidden your voice?

Your ghost begged my father not to forget you,  
though he bound us all in silence,

long, crooked stitches across our mouths,  
darkness scrolled with wire

round the cradle endlessly rocking.  
Wake up, mother, I can't grow up

travelling inside you  
all these years.