

People never fail to injure,
Pollute the limpid channelled word,
Manipulate my head and conjure
Dove-tailed smiles that lately stirred
A dead thing that was lodged inside,
Embedded in my flesh-lined self
Where it had crept with foetal stealth
And thought the safest place to hide.

From the flowers that scream in the ground
And the whales that sing in the sea
The message came to journey down
To the pallid face that turned to me
Like a moon in a darkened room -
'Ah yes, now I remember you
You dogged my measured steps into
The second passage of the womb.'

I saw the bruises on this neck
And smelt that sickly smell of sin.
It's all too easy to forget
That it was either me or him.
'You're an irritable winter wind,
Spiteful as you pull at me and kick
About the dead leaves lying thick
Inside the sheltered places of my mind.'

Charles Mayell