

## **Life on the X17**

The bus stops  
He maneuvers her on  
Into the niche marked  
Wheelchairs, prams  
He puts down his bag  
And sits face to face  
With the woe-wizened hag  
He's pushing about  
'Hold on tight, ma,' he says  
Won't be long, won't be long'  
And begins to sing a familiar song...

The bus moves on  
And he's up again  
He can't sit still  
His raincoat dripping  
From a recent shower  
His bag of shopping  
Sopping wet  
Incontinence pads  
A bottle of pop  
And wrapped round his chips  
The Northern Gazette

The bus comes to a stop  
And he's up again  
He can't sit still  
This time it's her nose  
He catches the snot  
In a rag from his bag  
And the old woman flops  
In her second hand chair  
Her curved spine in shock  
Face inches from her knees  
Her foot stuck at an angle on  
A broken peddle  
She lifts her head but it nods  
Like a bobbing dog  
In the back of a car  
As she tries to cough

The bus sets off  
And he's up again  
He can't sit still  
His mother's in pain  
He strokes her hair  
Smiles in despair  
'It'll pass, ma' he says

As he tucks her in  
And he turns to me  
'She needs a new chair  
This one's worth nothing  
After *all* she's been through  
Orphaned, widowed  
World war two  
It's not her fault  
What can I do?'

The bus comes to a halt  
And he's up again  
He can't sit still  
She's slipped an inch  
Her skin feels the pinch  
Her feet are skew-whiff  
She's all adrift  
He hoists her up  
She's back in the chair  
He strokes her hair

The bus is delayed  
A young lad with no fare  
And he's up again  
He can't sit still  
He fishes his wallet  
Out of his bag  
And pays for the lad  
Then turns to me  
'Go out or go mad  
You know what they say  
Flow with the day  
I'm lucky that way  
A natural optimist  
That's me. Lucky  
It's my middle name'

The bus changes lane  
And he's up again  
He can't sit still  
He presses the bell  
'Next stop hell' He jokes  
Next stop hell  
We're almost home, ma  
A nice cup of tea.'  
And he turns to me  
'We're lucky to have buses  
To get us about'  
And he pushes her out  
The bus sets off

The wonderful world  
Of the X17