

A View From Carsick Hill

A once green city, twined about the curving banks of rivers, grew
until green spaces were confined to hollows in a grid of railway lines.
Cobbles and yellow walls came interlined with brick and tarmacadam.
Green curves were city-simplified to lines laid down in concrete.
Barriers protected cars from walkers, filtered traffic into lanes.

A city, any city, cathedral quartered, virtuous at heart, may find
greed prefers virtual reality. Where hungry vessels undermine,
deep roots will break and branches wither until frail canopy remains.
A city which remembers coal, steam, furnaces, may yet forget
how fummy lungs struggle to breathe – and cut its own airline.

Stout hearts may fail, confined to grids of highway lines,
and still a wheezing city claim a sacrifice of trees.
The city covers up its ears. However many women sing
of leaves, however many green men shake their beards,
the mercenaries march its avenues and lanes.