**Existentialism on the Gravelly Hill interchange**

This is a place of being and nothingness, a nexus at risk of collapse.

Some see beauty in the eighteen roads of colonnades, the concrete pillars,

a Roman temple of motorway columns and carriageways.

Classical knots of roads and overpasses are suspended above flight paths

of Canada geese over railway lines, canals and the rivers Rea and Tame,

where wild purple lupins and yellow daisies grow on the riverbank.

Perhaps I once saw this myself. Underneath lies the Armada pub, now closed,

where talk was of sofas and fridges entombed with gangland corpses

in the concrete struts. Now litter rains down on the gardens

from passing clattering overhead cars in this wasteland sunset,

and the whole place is plunged in pinky-orange light:

gasometers, tower-blocks, Villa Park, the city centre beyond.

I know I’ll never see the light this way again. Today I follow the exit

up and over until I hit the crest, I’m strapped up, wide eyed

each time I round a bend, my pulse wild to be forever wreckage.

Too late to turn back, I unbuckle my seatbelt, see the street arteries

bleeding below the guardrail. Giddy with the vertigo of possibility,

my breath saws as I gasp the dizziness of freedom, the either/or

of the sheer drop.