

CRYSTAL HURDLE

## **ANNE'S WEDDING PHOTO**

the black and white has been colourised  
but I'm sure the blush is real  
carmine lips  
elegant  
veil diaphanous to her feet  
and the train so long  
it made the flower girls sigh

lilies and roses in her bouquet  
with buds tied on ribbons  
cascade to her slippers

I wish I'd been one of those girls  
strewing petals in Anne's wake  
on her day of days

her smile is bright in the photograph  
over sixty years old  
today the same smile

if I look up

I can stroke the wedding gown  
blush satin  
white in the photo then  
soft cream

now

she gives it to me  
my most precious possession

it zips up one side between hip and armpit  
designed to show off her figure  
won't close on me  
no hourglass for me

At 90 Anne claps her gnarled hands to see me in it  
*Lovey, you look a treat!*  
*you could have been the marzipan doll*  
*on my wedding cake*

in a secret niche downstairs  
her christening gown hides  
white crochet and ruched smocking  
made by her mother  
hemmed with eyelet lace  
pink roses French knotted into place  
lovingly girdled with long ribbons

Soon Anne will be tiny enough to wear it

## PIRACY

marooned in the house  
 that will soon no longer be hers  
 barely aware she's been shipwrecked  
 she could swim to one of the chesterfields  
 floating, so many of them!  
 if only she had the will  
 she is shrunken  
 growing smaller into herself  
 soon to become a fish  
 conserving energy,  
 barely breathing

through the waves  
 she sees people pick over her treasures  
 sniff, offer her little,  
 say things like, "I could take [ ] off your hands"  
 but her hands smell of brine  
 and the scales are metallic  
 shiny like the precious metals she's lost

when out of her sightline  
 as the horizon tips  
 they chortle with glee  
 at the plunder  
 salivate over the booty  
 spread out the silver  
 rub their hands together  
 gloat, glint  
 kick up their heels and dance

on the sandy bottom  
 she taps the thin copper piece  
 that had looked like gold

too late, she's on to them  
those pirates will want this, too  
they've taken everything

she swallows it like a vitamin pill  
acid, but it goes down  
it will take more doing for them to take it  
now  
the gills will take some getting used to