

Chamomile

Within its fragrance, the hill, the alleys,
Marked out a territory as it had,
Then. So I pulled one, its roots an unbrushed
Wig, and took it home. She watched me plant it
Where the soil was dark. Chamomile scent spread
Everywhere those days, the way hers lies
Always in recall when I drive away
In the mornings. It filled my sleep all night
As I wandered childhood fields and it washed
Round lighted images of my father
And my cousin as they talked boats somewhere
Just in and out of hearing. But the sweat
On my body when I woke was hers too
And she was sleeping still in my head, there
And in all of my movements, when I looked
At the chamomile, dying, dead, its smell
Seeming the last of its life. Breathless rain
Hammered the day. I saw the world through wet
Windows like silver bark. Only her smile
In the evening and the life unlocked
In the chamomile knew me. "I put it
In the rain jar," she said. On the sill, two
Flowers pushed outwards, taking light again
Where their scent and punctual darkness met.

— *Ian Caws*