

## **Cycling flat**

Unchecked at the shed, I push off  
content to take the road. Quickly  
aware, despite fleshy pads, I wheel  
on metal ribs and arse bones.

Down cobbles, I feel rhythms  
from a back tyre's half flat, but press on  
towards that firth downhill.  
I'm not going there. But I press  
water's glassing presence  
under my squinty helmet.  
Soon, I fill canvas bags  
with bought pyjamas and grabbed  
rhubarb; handlebar slop  
unsuitable burdens to knee  
metronome. Cold-knuckled now, my mind  
cranks up gears as I pedal slower  
into the swilling wind in from the Tay.

Sometimes I stop, walk a little,  
rearrange stuff, and wonder how long  
we'll manage this road.