

THE WEATHER IN TOHUNGA CRESCENT

It becomes ‘unnaturally’ calm
the moment you wonder who’s going
to be the first to ask what’s happened
to the wind when did we last see

or watch for it animate the
bunched long-bladed heads
of the *ti* tree and all the dials
fidget in the sky and then it did

and we breathed again? The moment
comes when the bay at the bottom
of the street has been glassy a moment
too long the wind is in a bag

with drowned kittens god knows
when that was and which of us
will be the first to sat funny what’s happened?
and it won’t be a silly question

when it’s your turn in the usual
chair to stare up into the cloud-cover
in which a single gull steeply
stalling dead-centred the hole

in a zero the stillest abeyance
and vanished into the morning’s
expressionless waterface
‘not a line on paper’ your finger

pricks as if it might but won’t
be lifted for something say switch
off the ‘life support system’ of the
whole damned visible material

world quite calmly would that be
fair to the neighbours or the birds
other ideas? Seven stilts
at a standstill a study in black

and red beaks all the better to
stab with are modelling for Audubon
mounted on sand in the frame of your
own choice with nothing to shift

the cloud around the morning could
easily be dead mirror to mouth
not the foggiest hope fluttering
the wind-surfer lies flat on the beach

failing actual wind pressure from
that quarter north-east as it happens
and another pressure like time
squeezes the isthmus the world you

didn't switch off so that coolly
as you recline bare-armed looking
up the spongy firmament has begun
drizzling the paper's getting wet

put the pen down go indoors
the wind bloweth as it listeth or listeth
not there's evidently something
up there and the thing is the spirit

whistle for it wait for it
one moment the one that's one too
many is the glassiest calm an
'intimate question' for the asking.