

Winslow, Arizona

***Brian Campbell
Long Kesh***

I was once in Winslow, Arizona.
Such a fine sight to see
Where the earth seeps dust
And the heat surrounds a lethargy
So deep the people
Turn their heads
In slow motion.
The bars breathe guilt
Round lonely drinks;
Life is on the highway
En route to somewhere else
And the town's streets
Are teeth
In cynical jaws.

Yet American culture
Is a mask
So bright
That in Dundalk
On Friday night
'Round the chip vans
You'd find lots of people
Who'd say they'd just love
To live in Winslow, Arizona.

But What About You?

***John McComb
Frankland Prison, England***

Worn by the constant
Battle to make do
Buffeted on high
By searing winds

Broded
In briny seas
Shunted and pulled
And pushed
Along mascara tracks
Thrown up and thrown
Out In
Sick bags for the children
Intimidated by self
Amid the strangers
Smothered
In mumbled words
Frightened and raped
By the PTA
Scarred
Broken against high grey walls
Severed on the razor wire
And lost touch across a table
With nothing left to give
For daring to be
Aged by the lonely walks home
While couples walked arm in arm
Chained by the expectations of others
Don't look back it's gone
If you drop the wait
They didn't win
Destruction
Isolation was their aim
There's no victory in that
Only pain so
Don't be hard on yourself
You invite guilt
That was never yours
Go with a smile and
Be

* PTA = Prevention of Terrorism Act: a set of Machiavellian laws introduced in Britain which in effect legalises racism towards Irish people.