

FLEMISH COFFEE

Once it gets into your blood
poetry is a drug like any another

To turn into a stone, a tree
On an undiscovered planet
In the dream of an African boy
Drunk on his mother's milk.

To fade away in Keats' phrase
Leaving behind the fretful ego,
The need for company and song,
The heavy warmth of heart and head,

The time-consuming search for words,
The life one longs to disinherit,
The cosy cafés killing time,
The smell of coffee on one's breath.

Do all men harbour sexual drives
In summer, winter, autumn, spring?
Why not use our free bus tickets
To go round and round for ever?

Poetry is pure sublimation
Come to think of it, a poor excuse
For not lowering one's neckline,
Plunging boldly into action

The little glass of alcohol
Is in the price of the coffee –
Either you want it or you don't...
The waiter's voice rings down the hall.

Were there just one tree on this square
I survey in mystified wonder
Those pigeons might easily escape
The unwanted advances of schoolboys.

Marcus Cumberlege, Lappersfort Poets Society