

A Bend in the Truth

It's the crying in the attic
It's the footfall on the stair
The tapping on the window
By a hand that isn't there.

It's the optical distortions
And the lines that seem to bend
It's the river running backwards
Up the stairs that never end.

It's the innocence of childhood
Those endless summer days
It's misremembered picnics
And 'good old-fashioned' ways.

It's the sham of independence
It's the act of being alone
It's the severing of the guy-ropes
And the dream of coming home.

It's the parting of the waters
and the water into wine
The pope's infallibility
When he speaks in tongues divine.

It's the chirpy war-time neighbours
It's the sing-song underground
It's the winking at the camera
While the air-raid sirens sound.

It's 'my father was a hero
And my people did no wrong'
The automaton's rendition
Of the nationalistic song.

It's the peace between the nations
It's the laying down of arms
The brandished declarations
And the politicians' charms.

It's the smile of the abuser
It's the 'promise I will change'
It's the elusive place of safety
That's always out of range.

It's the smoke and it's the mirrors
It's the hidden velvet fist
It's illusion, it's delusion
It's gaslight in the mist.