

On the death of a weed

An afternoon of clearing weeds
Creates a pile of corpses
Of leaves and petals, roots and twigs
Destroyed by snips and pulls and digs
An army rotting on the lawn
Its weapons spent, defences torn
Disarmed of all its forces

Each weed did everything it could
To win the right to flourish
This one had beauty of its own
Its fragile flowers barely grown
It never knew it was a weed
Just struggled upwards from a seed
And all I did was punish

I touch its tiny thorns and buds
And smell its earthy fragrance
My work is done, my victory
Complete beneath this apple tree
And yet I feel a faint despair
For even weeds deserve our care
Now death is on my conscience

The evening news says climate change
Will raze and kill and smother
The vegetation on the grass,
Which wilts as gin refills my glass,
Cannot recover, limply dead

It lies, forever, on my head

And I, a nature lover

And soon a tortured Earth will writhe

And burn beneath a vast sun

And fire will rage and oceans boil

Amid the rising stink of oil

And every scateur I wield

Reminds me death cannot be healed

This weed could be the last one