

MARRY IN HASTE

Pull down the white curtain –
nothing you already have will do.

Cut a little distance from the outline of yourself,
you have to have room to breathe. Then sew.

Stitch by stitch it should come together.
It doesn't matter about the weather,

you don't get married to feel warm, or cold.
It turns out you can repent at pressure,

from when you are young,
till when you grow old.

BASEMENT

The gutted basement is what
we *like* about the house.
We can live perfectly well
upstairs, over our dreams
of those new interlocking
floorboards, eight centimetres
thick, that we'll have laid
downstairs. Sliding
doors, walls we imagine
in different places,
it is all we talk about
for months, while
we leave the gas leaking
upstairs again, forgetting
to light the flames.
I quite *like* the smell.
We'll put the children
downstairs, when it's built.
And build a basement
under them, more gutted
floors, broken concrete
and disconnected sinks,
somewhere to move
the junk down to,
and plan to floor as well.

BADMINTON

It's not a dumb *game*, you're dumb
at it. Though it doesn't help
to say that, and you're getting
better. This is probably
the only day we'll ever get
to play like this, you realise,
it won't work in the wind, and
this is *Wellington*. We
don't have a net, we're just
counting volleys, pretty
good to hit three, then
we hit five, then our world
record of seven.
We're going for eight,
even if the clothesline
gets in the way, even if
that lunge back has me falling
backwards over the wall
that came down in the storm,
into the compost, trying to get up
in time for your next shot,
stepping further back
down the bank, stumbling
over the blackberry vine,
feeling for the concrete steps
buried somewhere under the grass,
because we've got to beat

eleven now, and although
it is getting dark, there is still
the thwack of *something*
on the strings I've hit,
and I can hear someone
stumbling down the bank
after me, hitting
something, and who
could it *be* except
for you?