All Quiet on Table Bay

I dreamed the landscape where floppies get wasted.
All's quiet on Table Bay —
night is Nelson Mandela murmuring in his sleep
and Robben Island being moored, the darbies on its wrists drawn.
Tugs snuffle and bump the quay, horns silent,
feed at seamed breasts of the sea.

Uitlanders in their '79 Chevs line for the great horse Karroo race, self-willing the old prophecy

that one day all the cars, caravans, from Clifton to Roodepoort, will pour over Seapoint and swim for America.

In his tent in Pretoria, when the purple jacarandas bloom and shall bloom each spring,

our master switches off the radio on 'Groot Constantia Moon I'm Lonely'.

In his ears, softly on the breeze, is a mine-worker's gum dance. But I dream of our mountains of the moon, boom-lay, boom-lay, boom-lay, boom.

On the shores, amongst bodies of Blacks, was washed a white woman growing slightly unseasonable, the rollers blurring the fine profile,

the Plath of Clifton carrying in her head, with bulbs bursting, her own bell jar and cellar —

feeling for death with loathing hands on the slimy steps, a fine and private place with the dark

kissable as flowers as it fusses and boils round the cave —
her dreams peer from bronze medallions like parsley from bread
and butter,

swelling in boiled blue eyes from the sand and vines it should never have left.

In the courtyard beside the furze unprofitably gay there's peace and holy quiet to wash the smell of reproachful elephants.

COLIN STYLE