**Arum Lilies, Belfast**

She’s bent over, pulling at things

busy with tending

a fine show of lilies, white explosions

and I make the happy mistake of commenting

ask what kind they are

say how gorgeous they look

and now she’s off into the garage for a spade

to get digging up a clump

all the while rattling through

the loveliness of them, right enough

the ease of them for growing

how she got them from an old friend.

We exchange names as she’s digging up.

I’ll give you a good big clump, Charlie.

Mind and keep them wet, they’ll have had a shock.

Are you over for the Orange Parade, Charlie?

I tell her no without telling her everything

and we’re talking about the Troubles suddenly

Isabel and me

how she never planned to move up to Belfast.

You get married, Charlie, and that’s you here.

Was usually okay in this neck of the woods, so it was.

Better everywhere too now, which is good.

Now mind and put these in water, Charlie.

They’ll have had a shock with the digging up

and the moving about

and the replanting.