

Words

Words which touch or speak
By rote; which bind and free;
Which wound and heal; make solid,
Mould, flex and dissolve;
Which both beguile and repel,
Can skewer thought and action
Or slide by barely noticed;
Can lodge in the soul for ever
Or evaporate in an instant;
They spill uncontrolled
Or drop tightly constrained;
They seal, and cut loose;
Of unimaginable
Power – and of none;
They are tools to enable thought
And a means of avoiding it.
A word cannot enclose
Meaning, any more than a cell
Can enclose a flickering soul,
Infinitely varied
Yet widely understood.
Plain speech set in code
And paradox crystalised.