words

the upper limitations of voice have not been reached

the lower

hide their baseness in heavy syllables

we content ourselves with a middle range a common blandness

except in dream
when words no dictionary
has ever housed roam
at random and at liberty
to surprise us as we
negotiate a bannister
leap out at us in reflection
from a glassy maze
nibble our fingers
and devour our tongues

some play leap-frog
on a hand-set page
or undergo (in newspapers)
part-change operations —
emerging with new names

others fulfill themselves in ravishing music barely imagined by prima-sopranos as they soak in bubble-baths trying their voices on unstoppered vials

whole epics write themselves repeat each work in parody reduce large volumes to a single mute haiku

awake we're back to old double-talk

but — dream words are waiting in the dark their opportunity

the scream

words have a military look the way — direct from the typewriter they stand in straight rows and columns

each one neatly following the next

so orderly

and on the pages of a book they march in step obey the laws of syntax or brazen out their uncouth natures under the disguise of a spanking uniform

they are all representatives of country party religion or special sect

each has its sex and in the proper season

multiplies

yes - words - we all know

spring

up as young men fully armed

and they can wear mufti but they never take me in I want to disperse their ranks splat them in undignified attitudes

as if fallen from a dizzy height

all over

sharp spiky surfaces

I need words whose weapons have been broken

who have

no pride left no ambition — squat peaceful anarchists

only

because they have no power

words of unspeakable anguish that moan all by themselves

and scream

that shriek and scream out loud for all to hear

right here

in my poem

paddy webb