

Alien

You snap into focus, trapped
By the glare of a security light.
Lumpy, squat, pocked and pitted.

Alien.

Your crouched appearance
At my front door,
Cornered by concrete,
Surprises me.

What are you doing here?
Where did you come from?
What danger made you seek refuge
In this inhospitable place?

You don't belong on a driveway.

I fetch water, sprinkle a few drops
On your wrinkled skin, wait for tight muscles
To spring you away, watch heartbeat flutter
Under pudgy, puckered flesh.

How do you feel?
Small and scared I imagine.
Anthropomorphising is a big word
For such a tiny creature.

Tomorrow, when the rain stops, sunlight
Will cut across the concrete,
Burning bitumen until it bakes.

What will you do?
Where will you go?
I fetch more water, eager
To make you at home.

I feel singled out by your appearance,
Amazed at your strangeness,
Delighted by your unexpected arrival.

What do they call you?
Pobblebank? Platyplectrum?
Unfamiliar, foreign-sounding frog names
Stumble on the tongue.

Welcome, stranger.

Later, I muse on your coming.

Say I open the door one day.

Say I find, crouched,

Trapped by the security light,

Cornered by concrete,

Someone called Omar, Ahmed, or Kamal.

Would I ask questions?

Would I say welcome, stranger?

Or would I shut the door

And call the police?