

The Secret of Belief

by Bill Yarrow

I don't believe in symbols
but there's a hole
in my living room window
in the shape of a bird

A hail stone punched out
the profile outline
of a nightingale or bluebird
or blackbird or thrush

Well, I have no idea really
I can't tell a robin
from a vulture
or a seagull from an eagle

A bird of some kind though
head, beak, torso, tail
with spindly bird feet
clearly in the broken pane

Were I a believing man
I'd almost accept
that there was meaning
in the shape of broken glass

But nature has no purpose
accidents are impervious
to intelligence
the random is no icon

Unless there really is a God
unless unbelief is a bagatelle

unless this is a true calling card
of the Paraclete

Listen up, archaic torsos—
here's the secret of belief:
(but, sssshhhh, it's not for publication)

m i n d
y o u r
r e v i s e
m u s t
y o u

