

Ode to O

How old is O? As old as woe?

Immediate relatives are walone [oʊlɔːn] and zeroes,

stark naked and exposed, the class has nothing

to lose, but chicken eggs.

The most tragic and loneliest of the alphabets;

in sorrow, horror and terror, they are indispensable.

A moth flaps around a light bulb. A mongrel pisses

at a thousand-year old pine bonsai in a zen garden.

The sun, the moon, and the planets.

A revolutionary serpent swallows its own tail.

A battalion of insatiable mouths with begging bowls.

A wedding ring, an epitome of panopticon.

The samsara, the gloomy-go-round, the sourceless

and endless bouts of births and deaths.

A bullet hole in a bamboo wall.

The sun, the moon and the planets.

You can't make a wee [ɔː] without a wa [o].

No fellatio without an O.

You can't say NO! without an O.

No matter how you draw an O,

it will never be a perfect circle

The mistress of the house

Lest she upset the cosmic balance
she gave a second thought to the cobweb
at the corner of the kitchen ceiling.

On the radio she heard
four prisoners had been hanged
in a remote dictator land.

A woman does house chores.
A tyrant kills dissent.

She decided
to leave the cobweb to
the stay-at-home
layabout of a husband.