Windflowers

1 We should be rising up, but we get about our lives, mildly alarmed by the weather. The windflowers quiver in their pink and white frocks by the door of my shed, as if they knew what was coming. A late storm 2 Breaks a hot day wide open at six, and by seven summer's over. Maundy Thursday. Fall equinox, and grey rain falls till the sky turns black and a brilliant moon rolls most of the way across the face of the deep. There's a Korean word I learned tonight: 3

Han. An affliction of the soul so profound,

no tears will come. It wells into art sometimes. Samuel Barber heard it. Arvo Pärt. It lies in Van Gogh's fields

of fallen wheat, the harrowed face of god. The abject music of the cold

4

Night sky, washed by cloud at ten o'clock,

when I walk to the house on the evening of Christ's death. Elegy consoles; it delivers us from hope and restores us to the canticle of the given world. In the dark, cars beat violently past.

5.

This is how doubt comes-death, too, in its time-

along the wet holiday road

to your door. If you lie here listening for it,

it's all there is. It comes and comes,

and then it's over. Silence for a full five minutes at midnight is the afterlife

6.

In pyjamas. Good Friday now. But what's the good

of dying to save

a crucified creation? The son of man lies in his grave;

roll the moon across the mouth

of heaven. He's not coming out any time soon. Not till Sunday,

anyway. Where was I then?

7.

You asked me again. Before. Looking at the photograph

of your mother by the bed.

With god, I told you. And where was god?

Your litany; our catechism. God is before

and after and in between everything. I said. Making it up all over again.

8.

He's the bit that never wasn't. The bit that always is.

And so were you. We read a book

then, and you went to sleep, wherever that is.

And now the night is cold. Cloud is a shroud

upon the body of the earth, and the windflowers stand weeping.

---Mark Tredinnick