

## LONG WAY TO MORNING

Every night after the light,  
after the meaning and memory of light,  
it closes in slow, thickens, talls,  
on greased silent wheels or a cushion of black steam.  
A passing prison around my bed. Impenetrable  
something. Nothing. I see it by  
what I can't see because of it: no more  
thin dark-on-dark blazonry making like goblins rampant  
for half-reared children, no curtained rectangles  
or bias bands on the ceiling. No more  
wet marigold smell, tire whisper,  
small wind balls banked off my headboard.  
I am contained pitch-pit totally like once when I  
crawled frown first into my father's sealskin sleeping  
bag. This Now I don't touch—I know I can,  
know it won't burn, draw back as if.  
The only sight is echoing haloes of pyrotechnics I  
explode behind pressed lids. My bones  
sweat, marrow melts, runs, short circuits  
my long red guitar strings. A Malay rebanna drum  
bombards my bed, beat for this big exercise,  
this big rehearsal. One night I'll stroke it  
like sealskin, embrace it whole, hard. Only  
sleep is the final fear: what I've never met  
eyes open, all senses pricked like a wine connoisseur's tongue,  
and nerve-fingered warp by weft.