Some Old Photographs

weather evocative as scent

the romance of dark stormclouds

in big skies over the low wide river

 of long shadows and longer shafts of light

of smoke

 fabulous film-noir stills of Central Station

of freezing fog silvering the chilled, stilled parks

 of the glamorous past

 where drops on a rainmate are sequins

 in the lamplight, in the black-and-white

your young, still-lovely mother laughs, the

hem of her sundress whipped up

by a wind on a beach before you were born

all the Dads in hats

are making for Central at five past five

in the snow, in the rain, in the sudden what-a-scorcher,

in the smog, their

belted dark overcoats white-spattered by the starlings

starlings swarming

in that perfect and permanent cloud

above what was

never really this photograph

but always all the passing now

and noise and stink and smoky breath of George Square

wee boays, a duchess, bunting, there’s a

big launch on the Clyde

and that boat is yet to sail

Liz Lochhead