In the Intensity of Final Light

Charles Tomlinson
In the Intensity of Final Light.

In the intensity of final light
   Deepening, dyeing, moss on the tree-trunks
   Clares more green than the foliage they bear:
   Hills, then, have a way of taking fire
To themselves as though they meant to hold
   In a perpetuity of umber, amber, gold
Those forms that, by the unstable light of day,
Refuse all final outline, drift
From a dew-cold blue into green-shot grey:
   In the intensity of final light
A time of loomings, then a chime of lapses
   Failing from woodslopes, summits, sky,
Leaving, for the moonrise to untarnish,
   Hazed airy fastnesses where the last rays vanish.

Underground

Tall—too tall
for a dancer—'I'm
a dancer' was all
she'd say, shrieking
clacking a routine
in the one space
they'd cleared between
her and the wall: those
nearest, on the packed
platform were backing
away to avoid
her flailing legs:
animal activity,
decay of faculty
bespoke a woman
who moved with neither
pain nor thought,
isinsensibly subdued
to endless sound:
all the crowd
she disowned utterly
facing her wall,
lost in the space
they'd left her
and never once
did she turn
round to accost
or denounce them: well-dressed, you could see