

Diane Cluck, Ink & Needles

someone's ink and needles
have written skin riddles
on his body bare before me except for these sketches
signal and semaphore
for things he won't talk about
quiet and shut about his padlocks and latches
my fingers trace his pictures and at each his breathe catches
he says why are you bare
bare as the day day you were born born from your mother
i say so you can tattoo
with the marks of lovers
the red trails of his fingers
the bumping pallate of his boney hip
sharp tooth beneath his softest lip
the kiss obscures the bite
he sketched his designs on me all through the night
he finished and was sleeping so i jumped the early flight
now a thousand miles away
with the passing of the days
your colours fall from my skin like the moon smooths out the waves
so quietly they left that i didn't see them fade
i don't need ink and needles
to write me my excuse
the body does tattoo itself
with old age and abuse
with lines pooled from the inside drawn from pain and revelry
my body will tattoo itself with what you mean to me