

The ship aground

We have come over Tower Bridge over
the river's silver over
basculated stone, steel and we have
curved, curled toward St Saviour's Dock,
where monks walked, where Sikes fell,
where now the narrow streets are silent
in sunlight in high blue where
old poverty meets new money where I am
newly free on two wheels new swift
curling, curving over cobble and tarmac
past the brick-built pub just up
from the water's edge.

The ship aground:
mullioned windows, darkened glass, St George's
flag still pinned by the pitch
of the red-tiled roof, the ship aground
cast up here on this shore
of spring breeze and birdsong, anchored
in shadow, the ship aground in lockdown,
beerless beacon of better days, hithe
as haven, holding all still till the tide turns and
we pilgrims balanced at the water's edge can
unfurl our sails, can set out for what we will call
the new world.