

## Lapwings

Men cut down the wych elm for the housing group  
who said their clients didn't like the mess of leaves  
it littered on their gardens, or the shade it cast across  
their loungers and their barbecues. (And this is Scotland,  
right. Not Melbourne. Not some blue Floridian poolside  
where you have to ring police because a bear has  
climbed your fence.) Scotland. Where an upstairs flat  
might let you look into the branches of a tree in spring  
and think of Larkin and *their yearly trick of looking new*;  
where two plain pigeons lean, like lovebirds in the Solomons,  
above the washing lines; where all our history  
is making money off the back of wars, and nursing  
grudges. Today, my shadow on a deep-ploughed field  
and this deceit of lapwings doing their light-trick thing.