

SHOES

The husband gets home on time.
Each day he is happier, she sees it

like health overwhelming his tired frame,
Sweeping away all things unhappy.

On the step she sees her husband's shoes
bent from the happy way he walks.

They point happily towards the house.
No love, no marriage, no fury

nor ecstasy have ever brought
anything of him to her door before.

She watches happily as the shoes
sit patiently in the long evening.

The husband is starting supper
happily in the kitchen.

The wife smiles all the happy evening,
while the shoes wait, warm as dogs.

Polly Clark from Farewell My Lovely, Bloodaxe Books 2009