

Your life in red plastic

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1. The small jug from your mother's

We cleared her house to move her north
when she started to wander,
looking for people who were dead
and you, late back from school footie.
You bathed not showered; used it
to pour water over your head,
hair sticking then sleeking; lathered,
then sank back into an Ophelia float,
suds crowning you white.

2. The colander from your mates

You their union rep at work,
every day on the picket during the strike,
resolute, turning people and lorries away.
Until a newspaper boy turned up
one day and you let him through.
After an inconclusive result
they gave you the colander:
*Here, have this for your kitchen,
from your picket line, with holes.*

3. The grabber from local support services

Stuck in your start-the-day chair
lifting each sock with a surgeon's precision,
the care of an obsessive park-keeper.
Pulling them in turn
over the white plastic sock-horn,
tape-dangling it down to each foot.

Nothing to grab any more.
There's the corner where it stands.