

Michael Longley

DARTFORD WARBLER

It arrived in the post
In answer to my poems,
Jeff's sparky portrait
Of this rarest bird,
A Dartford warbler
Among gorse blossom,
Once only in my life
Glimpsed in Picardy
Where the Downs continue,
When I stood at the poet's
Grave and asked myself
Had Edward seen it too.

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PLOVERS

I

An anonymous Tommy
On the first day of the Somme
Guarded for half an hour,
For an eternity,
A plover's nest, to protect
The eggs from being trampled,
The rainbird's eggs.

II

Under heavy fire the plover that pretends
A broken wing dies of a broken wing.