**Dear Daughter,**

**(words on William Butler Yeats’ “A Prayer for My Daughter”)**

If a spoken word is wrong the script

misread misled the words are as

a distant storm howling

embers that spark a wave subsiding

a star in flight but not

the fire the sea the sky only a word

in a sentence a paragraph a page

in a tome of words

I speak words from these bruises

a linnet falling from a laurel tree

skin scarred calloused skin

where detritus smashed against

my hull my hull against piers

the sea’s wind scream

in seaside surge my words

to warn

I speak words through the smiles

my heart revealed in intimacies

from your smiles in mine

your dance on tiptoe

your cries in sunrise

your wise found sense

and eyes wide

to guide

I speak words from your crib

to your bride’s bed my child

and all the flashes and scratches

trials and tests and tendernesses

between child to teen and then

unseen acceptances forever

from innocence then experiences born

to love