

Norman MacCaig

A writer

Events got him in a corner
and gave him a bad time of it –
poverty, people, ill-health
battered at him from all sides.
So far from being silenced,
he wrote more poems than ever
and all of them different –
just as a stoned crow
invents ways of flying
it had never thought of before.

No wonder now he sometimes
suddenly lurches, stalls, twists sideways,
before continuing his effortless level flight
so high over the heads of people
their stones can't reach him.

Collected Poems

London, Chatto & Windus, 1990: 155