Field Mouse

for David Mortimer

It was tiny, its chest heaved, afraid,
scrunched tight into its corner of regret.
It looked out at me, a blade
clean through my heart, a human debt.
'It's only a little field mouse,' said Dad,
'so we'll take it to the racecourse and let it go.'
I rallied to the cause, glad
that it could live, we would know.

And now, as Cheltenham's railings rot, as padlocks
remain keyless 'round this so-contested space,
I think of Dad in his hole-ridden socks,
on bended knee, our mouse gone, without a trace.
And I spot a mouse at play on morning's dew, in grass gone
tall,
shadowed by the Actil smokestacks
and their wrecking ball.