

Heron on the Kelvin

Jogging through
Glasgow's buxom West End
past stately sandstone villas
elegant terraces frilled with cast-iron
and fuchsia
trefoil, turrets
and gothic spires piercing gray skies

away from the bustle of Byres Road
besotted with chic cafes and vintage shops
past the manicured lawns of the Gardens
down to the Kelvin
for many years a river
fouled by paper mills, now
fringed with willow and Indian balsam
slender leafy spine of *Glaschu*,
Scots Gaelic for this "dear green place."

Ducks paddle above the small spillway
where a grey heron often poses
in branches near an abandoned bicycle
intent on breakfast.

*Anchor me
to moss and current,
splash and flesh, flight and
moment; bolt me into
ancient place.*

Today no heron just a ginger beauty
sporting a micro-mini (this season's
fashion) and her mate hurrying
to work or classes at the Uni.
Och aye she exclaims, the rest,
though English, a rhythmic jumble
sounding to these dim ears like
a highland crofter, vowels broad enough
to drive
lorries through.