

# #Flashback

Different War

Falls Road. Barbed wire walls. Barred windows

An '80's paint-flaked door swings to and fro,  
creaking in night stillness

Wide eyes, search the darkness  
A presence, palpable

Little comes to the eye, save for the gleam  
of spit and polished high-gloss boots

A faint awareness  
Heartbeat. Deafening. The Silence

Cigarette smoke clings to the air

A sudden flash – light lands on the rifle butt

Something rustles in garden shrubbery – breaking cover  
they fall in, exit to the crackle and hiss of a radio call

'Come in  
Romeo-Victor-Hotel'. ... ..

Feet away, babies and children settle to sleep in cots,  
metal bars smoothed to the touch, with the passage of time

Exhausted parents lay down to take their rest  
floor mattresses, make-shift beds

Desperate, for one night – free from heavy footfall,  
distant voices, the whir and drone of vehicles on tired streets  
That Door. Bangs. Shut !

***Kate O'Shea***