

Joy-Riding
By Mary Allen

A bus called Dusty Springfield shimmies along tarmac,
swoops down Beaconsfield Villas, dives into Brighton,

splutters through pawnbrokers, pound stores,
charity shops, sails past the angular iron petticoat

smothering St Peter's Church, tips a wink
at Banksy's coppers snogging on the derelict bingo hall.

Green tides flood the foot of West Street: I leap off the bus,
race down the hill, past smashed bottles, clubbing litter,

waves cavort, crazed glitter balls, shingle slithers in slow
motion, the gaunt black outline of the West Pier tiptoes

through the sea, smirks at swimmers, hears the wind sing
with delight as starlings joy-ride through its frame of bones,