

March 2020

A grim walk westwards along the sea-front,
east wind scuffling in my sparse white hair.

Clean-slicing the air, gulls plunge, then settle
on the massive curls of a spray-hurling tide.

A shower spatters, has second thoughts.
A bench's inscription invites me to rest with

'Maureen and Gordon, beloved parents,
sadly missed'. So how did they die?

A young girl pants past, drink-bottle slapping
on her plump buttocks, clenched with resolve;

she grunts 'Good morning', answering my smile.
Another smile from a boy on a scooter and

I wave to a toddler who waggles a finger.
Suddenly these greetings coalesce into

celebration of human fellowship
in this virus-haunted, unreal Spring.

Diana Swann