

Miranda

serves cappuccino
at *The Alchemist*, Pink Lane,
she made it up from London
to where wicker chairs and tables
fill up with traffic from the station,
sprinkles milk with chocolate,
tries to read a message on the top.
Her father trawls the local papers
for her name. She spells the cards
for her decision—Corfu,
Katmandu or Casablanca?
Each night she lifts the sash cord,
leans her top half out as if a mermaid,
listens for the sea—it is only diesels
with night mail heading south.

DESMOND GRAHAM