

Notebook

My daughter enjoys the safety of lines,
whilst I prefer the blank page, diving

and spiralling bird free in a cloudless sky.
She cuts paper into delicate shapes,

Pastes petals, butterflies and collages,
begins again if there is one mistake.

I splatter words like Pollock onto clear canvas
and smudge, rub holes in paper, stain and tear.

My daughter bathes in milk, soaks in Carrib sun,
paints her nails as bright as her imagined future.

She perfects her dress, her look, takes time,
whereas I, careless, will wear the same for days.

She emerges at last, silky in a swirl
of turquoise, pink ipod, humming out of tune,

as I wait for her in the afternoon's heat,
my hand's shadow on the filling page.