

## Embarkation

Flocking onto requisitioned vessels,  
here come Brylcreem boys repurposed  
as temporary sailors, these sandbag bayoneters.  
Wisecrackers pack the boats  
backing out for battle.  
Funnels shriek, ropes flay at fo'c'sles.  
Mist lifts as we slip out sideways  
to wedge in the wings of a theatre of war  
or drop in oily horror.

Guess the percentage of practical jokers  
who'll dock, who'll fire,  
who'll return diminished,  
who'll re-embark minus a sidekick,  
who'll file down the gangway  
their tin heads bowed  
like monks in a silent order.