

New Year's eve 1985

I drag my gut's liquid ballast
up the few steps and fumble
a key doorwards.

Another year means nothing
much to me as I contemplate
bed.

Then startled, I am the vortex
of a whirlwind of noise, hands
grasp and grab, dragging me
to gathering of neighbours.

The place heaves, paper hats,
streamers, tinsel. Its not
my scene, yet I am touched
by their simple faith in tomorrow.

The men thump and jostle, put
drink in my grasp, and the
smiles from the women show
such relief now that I have come,
My cynicism wavers, and shrinks.

The women come forward and lead
me to strangers, "Here he is"
they say, "Terry the poet - our Terry".
And I sink without sound in
the warmth of my people.