Belfast Confetti

Suddenly as the riot squad moved in it was raining exclamation marks,
Nuts, bolts, nails, car-keys. A fount of broken type. And the explosion
Itself – an asterisk on the map. This hyphenated line, a burst of rapid fire …
I was trying to complete a sentence in my head, but it kept stuttering,
All the alleyways and side streets blocked with stops and colons.

I know this labyrinth so well – Balaklava, Raglan, Inkerman, Odessa Street –
Why can’t I escape? Every move is punctuated. Crimea Street. Dead end again.
A Saracen, Kremlin-2 mesh. Makrolon face-shields. Walkie-talkies. What is
My name? Where am I coming from? Where am I going?
A fusillade of question-marks.

CIARAN CARSON