

1990's

# The Manhunt

next stage  
- reality

After the first phase,  
after passionate nights and intimate days,

metaphor  
- endless flow

only then would he let me trace  
the frozen river which ran through his face,

plurive

only then would he let me explore  
the blown hinge of his lower jaw,

repetition of 'only then'  
- metaphor - mouth closed tightly

and handle and hold  
the damaged, porcelain collar-bone,

- delicate - empathy

and mind and attend

10 the fractured rudder of shoulder-blade,

and finger and thumb

the parachute silk of his punctured lung.

- fragile - hole in safety sheet

Only then could I bind the struts  
and climb the rungs of his broken ribs,

- searching

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and feel the hurt  
of his grazed heart.

1st proper ending

Skirting along,

only then could I picture the scan,

the foetus of metal beneath his chest

where the bullet had finally come to rest.

- metaphor - pain will grow  
- turned on its head

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determined

carefully

Then I widened the search,  
traced the scarring back to its source

- metaphor - unpredictable - volatile

caesura - enhances  
mind metaphor

to a sweating, unexploded mine  
buried deep in his mind, around which

woman is determined,  
and persevering, but  
ultimately it's a lost  
cause

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every nerve in his body had tightened and closed.

Period

Then, and only then, did I come close.

superlative

SIMON ARMITAGE

structure = ~~is~~ couplets - suggests  
broken interrupted attempt  
at finding the husband's mind.