

Chough Chavs

When choughs go bad
they strut their scarlet tights and
lipstick beaks, and set to thieving.
Not for them the gilt
and golden Brummagem
preferred by magpies though,
whose brash and raffish Mafioso
black and white is set off by
their green and violet waistcoats.

Nor do choughs prefer
the silver foil, the cheap
and cheerful fripperies, with which
those jack-the-lad daws fill their nests
(their sombre coats and silver-grey
coiffure fool no-one since old
Richard Harris Barham blew the gaff).

The Cornish chough, when chavvy,
still has taste enough to go for
tin and pewter: solid,
down to earth, yet with a beauty
to its matt but rich grey lustre.