I really enjoyed this poem. Highly accessible, without being simplistic, with some pretty rich language and a strong take on the set theme.

Good use of enjambment throughout, particularly effective on the end of the fourth stanza (‘the phenomenon,’) and the sixth stanza (‘war loomed,’).

You also make excellent use of consonance/assonance and subtle rhyme at various points in this poem (e.g.: ‘dip and dive, dropping’, ‘tree-line and street sign’, ‘mystifying simplicity’) which helps to lift the pace.

‘moons ripe with / blood’ – that’s a gorgeous bit of imagery, very concise and tangible. Most of your imagery is pretty sharp, but that one really jumped out at me.

The structure of this poem is quite tight, with consistent line-lengths and three-line stanzas throughout. For the most part, I think this works pretty well, in that it gives the poem a strong sense of rhythm. The quote on the final two stanzas is, of course, very powerful but what I really liked about this was the way you deviated slightly here from the structure of the rest of the poem, in that you gradually reduced the lengths of each line in the final stanza. This puts added emphasis on every image and sentiment contained within the quoted text, finally ending on that single sombre note, ‘of my country’. These few lines are not your own words, but I do get a strong sense here that ***you*** are speaking to us.

My only real gripe concerns the very first line, which feels like the line has been padded out with fairly fluffy language to make it fit the line length. For instance, ‘This morning, on the road to work,’ feels like a rather long-winded way to set the scene in what are fairly general terms. Sitting right next to ‘strangely’, which in itself is a fairly vague/abstract adverb to spend two syllables on, this opening line doesn’t have quite as much punch as the rest of the poem, which boasts much stronger word choice and pacing. I *do* think it is important to set the scene, but I wonder if you could place more focus on what happened (e.g.: ‘This morning I saw a strange glowing orb’), and allow the fact you’re driving to come through in the lines that follow (you already mention the fact you’re driving in the 3rd line anyway).

Also, one very minor point: ‘I left my car // and went inside’ – I assume by this you mean he went inside work, but the lines before (‘I followed it, // eyes flicking between road and sky to catch it’) implies that the speaker has given up on travelling to work to follow the orb instead, so this threw me a little.

I really enjoyed this poem. The story is vivid and clear, with a deeper meaning bubbling not too far beneath the surface, which creates a delicious sense of foreboding in the reader. Nice tight voice too. Very well done, thank you so much for sharing this with us 🙂.