

The background of the cover is a landscape painting. It depicts a wide river or lake in the foreground, with a rocky shoreline on the left and a steep, green hill in the background. The sky is a mix of green and brown, suggesting a hazy or overcast day. The overall style is impressionistic, with visible brushstrokes and a rich, textured color palette.

EARTHJAZZ

Martin Lucas



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My thanks to Cheryl for the inspirational picture, and for half a
lifetime of true friendship. My thanks also to Graham High, for
bringing this book into being.

Cover photo: C Jones
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"nightly", and "unquipping the vector" were previously
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Earthjazz

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heaven

through the first few flakes
of february snow
the beggar's tin whistle

Earth

the wild geese
their voices in the vastness
of the winter marsh

the wild geese -
their voices in the vastness
of the winter marsh

the distant mountains
so clear, so close
this morning of ice

lullaby ...
the sway of pine branches
in soft rain

first spring warmth ...
the quiet lapping
of kayak paddles

haze—
I hang my washing
beneath apple blossom

turning a page
in the exam booklet;
the may breeze

knotweed sprouting
one butterfly all along
the dappled path

a shadowed groove
through the limestone
and a single ant -
in, along, and out

cirrus cloud ...
the foal
flicks its tail

a bead of sweat
on my eyelid:
midsummer breeze

just one or two raindrops ...
a september bee
fumbling the thyme

nightsky blueblack the crow's back

cool autumn
the slow grazing of a horse
in a field of horses

between rusted rails
autumn darkness
and a few white stones

after the art exhibition
rain-rings
along the canal

deepening winter
darkness in the eyes
of a chained dog

nightsky blueblack the crow's back

earth

the newspaper boy
walks with his head bowed
in the frosty dawn

a glorious day
the stranger ignores me
his dog doesn't

frost underfoot
the silver-haired runner
slows to a stroll

a bend in the river
the mountains disappear
behind the landfill tip

on my way to the dentist's
the sound of a pick-axe
striking stone

blustery day
hailstones bouncing off
the dumped mattress

the kicked stone
- rattles off the path
the moon a day without aim

peeling the banana
- and then peeling it again -
the straggly bits

milky juice
 oozing from the onion -
 haze around the moon

scraping off
 the burnt edge of the toast -
 endless rain

sucking a mint ...
a trail of bubbles
on the green lake

after the interview
walking uphill into
the song of hail

on a narrow path
at cross-purposes
with a passing dog

a day of raw cold –
the peeled paint
on the window frames

through the rush-hour crowd
a man in football kit
with a bouquet of flowers

unripping the velcro autumn rain

after the interview
walking uphill into
the sting of hail

another day on the dole
rings of incense smoke, rising
into shapelessness

mist & dusk & light

winter dusk ...
gusts rustle
the blue gum

twilight shadows
two schoolkids
testing the thin ice

sunlit mist
a sudden brightness
in the lamb's eye

a cyclist
singing without inhibition
this cloudless evening

swallows swoop
long into the evening
the light of spring

twilight: across the lake
distant reeds take the shape
of a bittern

[for my father]

rain easing
across the fir-green hillside
wisps of mist

sparkling light
gulls gather
on the flooded field

greener than autumn light
on wind-bent reeds
the teal's wing

light lapping
at the edge of the lake
the oak's roots

the stillness
of the shire horse
mist and mud

evening crow
folding its wings
on the weathercock

mist in the valley
each branch of the beech sapling
tipped with dew

dusklight
the kettle boils
and clicks off

blue evening
eastwards over the rooftops
a crow with ragged wings

Jazz

autumn hills
out of the mist
out of the sea

the saltmarsh mist
loud with the calls
of unseen gulls

blue evening
eastwards over the rooftops
a crow with ragged wings
well into the night

autumn hills
out of the mist
out of the sea

the saltmarsh mist
loud with the calls
of unseen gulls
the hills are

Scottish rain

in the darkness
beneath birches
the foxglove's purple

Jazz

through larches
and a faint rain
the light of the loch

Scottish rain

in the darkness
beneath birches
the foxglove's purple

xxv]

autumn hills
out of the mist
out of the sea

through larches
and a faint rain
the light of the loch

with each tilt
a rain of drips
from the ship's rope

Scottish rain:
only a rabbit
bounding off the fairway

summer on Mull:
she describes the beauty of the island
when it *isn't* raining

island calm
the ship's wake
the only wave

a single swallow
skimming the drizzle
at the fifth tee

the shapeless shape
of blue rope
in a moored boat

beneath rhododendron bubbles in the rainpools

leaving the island ...
the rocking of a yacht
in the ferry's wake

jazz

first autumn coolness ...
from someone's mobile
a tinny bolero

I hurry through
a city that hurries—
first fallen leaves

high tide
when I return to the river
the swans return to me

a path to the sea:
the intense blue
of the jogger's top

autumn sunlight:
dust on the jars
in the spice rack

... she clings on to
the dolphin's tail –
the balloon seller

zazen at sunset:
I sense the night
begin to rise

sun between showers ...
seeds explode
from the balsam

jazz piano ...
all the colours in the cloud
after the rain

at moonrise the crack of ice

packing my bags ...
a single maple key
on the hallway floor

Christie
the taxi drivers chat
in Urdu

New Year's Eve

New Year's Eve
I squeeze a curl into
the toothpaste tube

between the folksong
and the flute ...
falling snow

night falls
on the mountain road—
a murder of crows

at moonrise the crack of ice

Christmas Eve:
the taxi drivers chat
in Urdu

the shard of ice
falls from shadow into light
and shatters

on the tenth day
of Christmas – your card
sheds its silver stars

[for my niece, Faith]

winter afternoon
the long, quivering shadows
of the unpicked chives

New Year's Eve
on a wild wind
sleet becoming snow

dragon dance

in Manchester drizzle
the slow twirl of
a festive lettuce

after the dragon dance
a queue for noodles

a perfect day
my fish and chips wrapped
in *The Guardian*

the high street at dawn:
some dummies with heads
some without

a small typo
in the solicitor's letter:
"free" has become "fee"

through the hole
in the Hepworth sculpture
a gallery radiator

a crowded market:
pigs' liver thrown in with
the lamb hearts

one dog bark
echoes another;
the glitter of glass ...

those pure forms
against the sky ... take flight
as pigeons

a petition for divorce;
the bitter taste of
a shrivelled pear

the hand gestures
of a lady giving directions
over the phone

in the dark
striking the wrong end
of the match

now I've eaten
the last chocolate—
it's just a box

spring river

into the swirls
of the spring river ...
the cormorant's dive

after-dinner conversation
she twists a plastic tag into
the shape of a star

my fingertips stained
with beetroot juice
spring dawn

where the clear river
clouds across the stones
eight swans

a path between trees ...
the dappled scent
of nettles

a light rain ...
sweeping the moor
the peewit's cry

wild garlic scent
the waterfall sound
fades behind us

4-year old's
colouring book:

the blue-headed
red-backed
orange-legged
green-bellied
frog

summer's passing

a fine spring day
the door of the secondhand bookshop
closes behind me

as far
as the eye can see ...
the river-song

between the rocks
and the river-breeze
the dance of light

wild garlic scent
 the waterfall sound
 as faded
 a fine spring day
 the door of the second-hand bookshop
 closes behind me

as far
 as the eye can see ...
 the river-song

the blue-headed
 red-backed
 between the rocks
 and the river-breeze
 the dance of light
 goes

summer's passing

summer's passing ...
the face of the boy
who missed the train

a summer evening ...
snapping in two
the long-stemmed grass

sea-sounds fade ...
the give of the sand
beneath my heels

at the corner
of a summer street: a half-eaten
gingerbread man

summer grasses
 leaning into
 larksong

light filtered
through a canopy of leaves –
cranesbill blue

late summer:
swallows gather;
the shire horses
swishing their tails ...

slowly nearing
the long, low island
across the tidepooled sand

on the burn
and the leaves of ash
late summer light

evening by the river
the spurt of red flame beneath
a hot-air balloon

summer's passing ...
the bracken
rusts

The world, Govinda, is not imperfect or slowly evolving along a path to perfection. No, it is perfect at every moment; every sin already carries grace within it ...

Hermann Hesse, *Siddhartha*

**

Nobody makes peace. Peace is. Who do you think you are, to *make* peace?

Ursula K. Le Guin, *Always Coming Home*

Places and dates of composition

through the first few flakes	Market St, Lancaster	24 Feb 01
the wild geese	River Lune, Lancaster	25 Feb 01
the distant mountains	R. Lune, Lancaster	25 Feb 01
lullaby	Lancaster	20 Feb 01
first spring warmth	Lancaster canal	19 Feb 01
haze	Lancaster	11 May 01
turning a page	Adult College, Lancaster	25 May 01
knotweed sprouting	R. Lune, Lancaster	7 May 01
a shadowed groove	Gait Barrows, Silverdale	29 Sept 01
cirrus cloud	Lancaster-London train	24 Aug 00
a bead of sweat	Lancaster	17 July 01
just one or two raindrops	Lancaster	25 Sept 01
cool autumn	Otley Chevin	17 Nov 01
between rusted rails	Preston-Leeds train	16 Nov 01
after the art exhibition	Hoxton, London	20 Oct 00
deepening winter	Moorgate, Lancaster	1 Dec 00
nightsky	Derwent Rd, Lancaster	12 Mar 01
the newspaper boy	Lancaster	23 Dec 01
a glorious day	R. Lune, Lancaster	25 Feb 01
frost underfoot	R. Lune, Lancaster	25 Feb 01
a bend in the river	R. Lune, Lancaster	25 Feb 01
on my way to the dentist's	Lancaster canal	26 Jan 01
blustery day	Lancaster	30 Oct 00
the kicked stone	R. Lune, Lancaster	5 May 01
peeling the banana	Lancaster	27 Feb 01
milky juice	Lancaster	8 Sept 00
scraping off	Lancaster	30 Oct 00
sucking a mint	St James's Pk, London	27 Aug 00
on a narrow path	Lancaster canal	25 Mar 01
a day of raw cold	Lancaster	23 Dec 01

through the rush-hour crowd	Leeds station	16 Nov 01
unripping the velcro	Lancaster University	7 Nov 00
after the interview	Dalton Rd, Lancaster	13 Dec 00
another day on the dole	Lancaster	23 Apr 01
winter dusk	Derwent Rd, Lancaster	12 Dec 00
twilight shadows	Lancaster canal	16 Jan 01
sunlit mist	Aldcliffe, Lancaster	29 Jan 01
a cyclist	Lancaster canal	23 Apr 01
swallows swoop	Lancaster canal	23 May 01
twilight: across the lake	Leighton Moss	25 May 01
rain easing	Skelgill, Cumbria	21 Aug 00
sparkling light	Lancaster-Leeds train	13 Oct 00
greener than autumn light	Cley, Norfolk	1 Sept 00
light lapping	Ullswater	25 Oct 00
the stillness	Shipley station	23 Nov 00
evening crow	Crosby, Liverpool	29 Apr 01
mist in the valley	Claife Heights, Cumbria	17 Dec 00
dusklight	Lancaster	1 Dec 00
blue evening	Lancaster	6 May 01
the saltmarsh mist	R. Lune, Lancaster	29 Jan 01
autumn hills	Derwent Rd, Lancaster	15 Oct 00
in the darkness	Glasgow-Oban train	25 July 02
through larches	Glasgow-Oban train	25 July 02
with each tilt	Oban	25 July 02
Scottish rain	Tobermory	26 July 02
summer on Mull	Tobermory	26 July 02
island calm	Tobermory	26 July 02
a single swallow	Tobermory	26 July 02
the shapeless shape	Aros Pk, Tobermory	26 July 02
beneath rhododendron	Aros Pk, Tobermory	29 July 02
leaving the island	Craignure-Oban ferry	30 July 02

first autumn coolness	Preston Post Office	28 Sept 02
I hurry through	Market Sq, Preston	25 Sept 02
high tide	River Ribble, Preston	23 Sept 02
a path to the sea	Formby Beach	21 Sept 02
autumn sunlight	Preston	21 Sept 02
she clings on to	Fishergate, Preston	20 Sept 02
zazen at sunset	Preston	20 Sept 02
sun between showers	Haslam Pk, Preston	7 Sept 02
jazz piano	Preston	7 Sept 02
packing my bags	De Beauvoir, London	25 Nov 01
New Year's Eve	Lancaster	31 Dec 01
between the folksong	Lancaster	9 Mar 02
night falls	Nant-y-moch reservoir	29 Dec 01
at moonrise	Nant-y-moch reservoir	29 Dec 01
Christmas Eve	Lancaster Rd, Preston	24 Dec 01
the shard of ice	Preston	21 Sept 02
on the tenth day	Lancaster	4 Jan 02
winter afternoon	Lancaster	19 Jan 02
New Year's Eve	Derwent Rd, Lancaster	31 Dec 00
in Manchester drizzle	Chinatown, Manchester	17 Feb 02
after the dragon dance	Chinatown, Manchester	17 Feb 02
a perfect day	Moor Lane, Lancaster	1 Feb 02
the high street at dawn	Fishergate, Preston	28 Jan 02
a small typo	Preston-Lancaster train	11 Feb 02
through the hole	Harris museum, Preston	12 Jan 02
a crowded market	Preston market	12 Jan 02
one dog bark	Ashton Pk, Preston	7 Apr 02
those pure forms	Preston	24 Mar 02
a petition for divorce	Preston	18 Aug 02

the hand gestures	Swallow Hotel, Gateshead	17 July 02
in the dark	Preston	15 June 02
now I've eaten	Preston	31 Mar 02
into the swirls	R. Lune, Lancaster	3 Mar 02
after-dinner conversation	[not recorded]	12 Apr 02
my fingertips stained	Preston	8 May 02
where the clear river	R. Ribble, Preston	6 May 02
a path between trees	Lancaster Priory	25 May 02
a light rain	Linton-Malham walk	3 June 02
wild garlic scent	Janet's Foss, Malham	3 June 02
4 year-old's	Windsor Ave, Preston	7 Sept 02
a fine spring day	Friargate, Preston	27 Mar 02
between the rocks	R. Ribble, Preston	14 July 02
as far	R. Ribble, Preston	14 July 02
summer's passing	Preston station	24 July 02
a summer evening	R. Ribble, Preston	14 July 02
sea-sounds fade	Blackpool beach	20 July 02
at the corner	Fenton St, Lancaster	16 July 01
summer grasses	Otley Chevin	30 June 01
light filtered	Valley Gardens, Harrogate	17 Aug 02
late summer	Hutton, Preston	16 Aug 02
slowly nearing	Lindisfarne	26 Aug 02
on the burn	Elsdonburn, Cheviot Hills	24 Aug 02
evening by the river	Avenham Pk, Preston	3 Sept 02
summer's passing	Glasgow-Oban train	25 July 02

By the same author

Haiku Collections

Bluegrey (Hub Editions, 1994)

Darkness and Light (Hub Editions, 1996)

.. Click .. (Hub Editions, 1998)

Violin (Bare Bones Press, 1998)

Moonrock (Ram Publications, 2002)

Haiku Anthologies

The Iron Book of British Haiku, edited, with David Cobb
(Iron Press, 1998)

The New Haiku, edited, with John Barlow
(Snapshot Press, 2002)

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