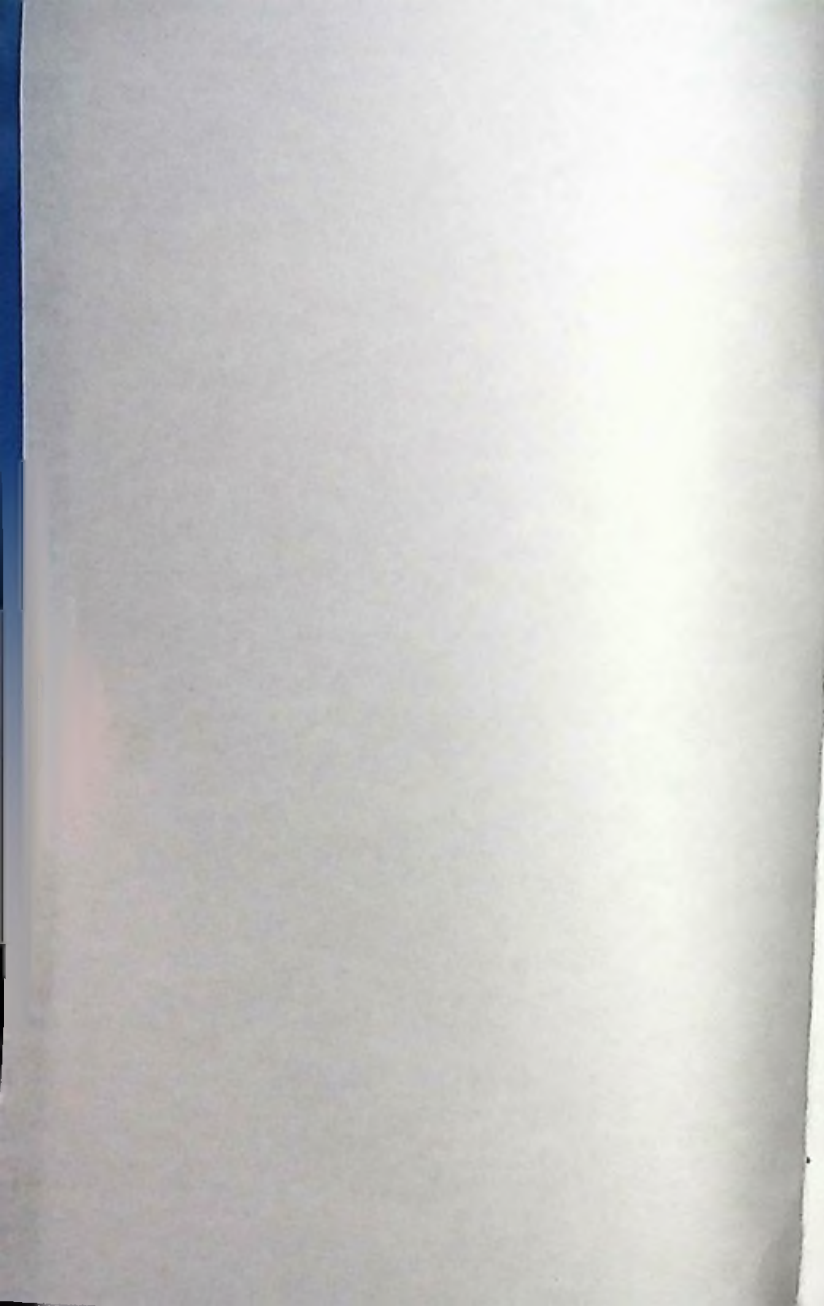


A photograph of a barn owl perched on a barn ridgetile. The owl is positioned at the very peak of a curved, grey stone or concrete ridge. Its body is primarily grey, with a distinctive reddish-brown patch on its throat and breast. The background is a clear blue sky with some light, wispy clouds. In the foreground, there are green, leafy plants, possibly ivy, which are slightly out of focus, framing the lower part of the image. The overall scene is a close-up, focusing on the owl and the structure it sits upon.

on a barn ridgetile

Colin Blundell





on a barn ridgetile

on a barn ridgetile

First Edition

WILSON'S WIFE, A NOVEL

on a barn ridgetile

Colin Blundell

Hub Editions

In Memory of James

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Preface

It's thirteen years since I last did a book of my own haiku/senryu. Amongst one or two other things during those years, I've had the privilege of spending four and a half of them editing *Blithe Spirit*, the journal of the **British Haiku Society**, which has, of course, entailed sifting thousands of examples of these little poems, mostly 'free-form' in construction. Somehow or the other, the experience must presumably have affected my own haiku-sensibility, assuming that there is such a thing.

Perhaps the main thing that happened in my own haiku-world was that a few days after James Kirkup died on the 10th May 2009 I ceased writing 5-7-5 haiku. Uncharacteristically, I joined a majority (a strange sensation!) and went 'free-form', sometimes adopting Auden's suggestion that the 17 syllables could be spread across a haiku, not strictly conforming to a 5-7-5 lie arrangement. Now I would no longer receive James' letters or publish his books, which I did between 1992 and 2006, this just seemed like something I had to do.

To put this book together I had first of all to find the place eighteen notebooks ago, more than 400 haiku away, where I left off collecting for *Back in the Country* (1997) which was strictly 5-7-5. Having found the place, I began to read with a new eye, recalling experiences, places, events and noticing unnecessary words and convolutions of expression but still very appreciative of the poems that fell naturally into 5-7-5 syllables. However, I enjoyed re-writing with a new sense of freedom. Back in the 1970's I submitted myself to the 5-7-5 regime believing that it was a useful discipline in my otherwise creatively undisciplined life. This it was, teaching me to abandon anything that seemed to need working at for more than three or four minutes; by reverse, my 'proper [undisciplined] poetry' seemed to me to benefit from a more imagistic approach.

My belief about haiku (I make no distinction between haiku and senryu—they come from the same place in my psycho-physical make-up) is that they are the product of a particular way of apprehending the world. It is different from the state you are in when you write a 'proper poem' though that state *can* encompass what's necessary for the writing of haiku.

How *do* we apprehend the world? Our habitual way is to give names to everything and imagine that we connect things up by talking/writing, using the names we have invented; but the unfortunate thing is that, eventually, the structures of what we like to call 'meaning' come to substitute themselves for 'reality'—they become one remove from what is actually there in front of us—they constitute an unnecessary meta-system. The way of haiku is not the habitual way; we have to step out of habit, the habit of thinking, the habit of imagining we can somehow tease out 'meaning'—step right out of the habit of thinking that 'meaning' is what we're about at all.

I come to this nowadays from a tradition seemingly distant from a Japanese point of view. GIGurdjieff talked about the highest form of food being the Food of Pure Impressions, what we can get when we look at the world without the lumber of association. Birds don't 'sing', grass doesn't 'wave', leaves don't 'rustle'. Things just are. Good practice is to look at things, listen to them, without naming them at all. No birds, no grass, no leaves—merely impressions that pattern the brain. Then haiku can happen. It's just a pity we need to use words, to give names to things, in order to capture the poem.

A little note on Found Haiku... When I'm reading I'm always aware that at any moment I may come upon some sequence of words a writer has used that make themselves into haiku in my head. For example, re-reading the novels of Henry Green recently, I became amazed at how haikuic his prose is and many examples of Found Haiku from his sadly neglected prose works appear towards the end of the book.

Anyway, are not all haiku just 'found' rather than worked at?

stroking cold night
out of the cat's brindled fur—
shrubbery & lawn

gold-coloured dawn—
our duck's a sun-worshipper
pacing the terrace

but the moon is full
with clouds sailing fast westwards
the eye fish-open
(James Hanley: A Dream Journey)

along the canal—
Gas Street Basin to Bath Row;
the limpid water
(Birmingham)

first blackbird singing
alabaster statues
reach for the sky

high-spirited lads
out on an expedition—
such language!

Christmas morning:
the white duck pecking away—
its usual habit

on a bus—
the full moon in hazy sky
turns a corner

from beside the church
an early workman whetting
his scythe at sunrise

(HGWells: Mr Britling Sees it Through)

village gathering—
collection of old snapshots;
outside snow falling

fishermen's niches
all along the Sunday drain—
a mackerel sky

long smudges of geese
over the winter-brown field
becoming a skein

in a green valley
the mist of summer mornings
in February

the blinds are lowered
at five of a winter night—
no light to dig by

in the late evening
with the sky growing solemn
something still wanting

(HGWells: Joan and Peter)

bombs fell on my boyhood
where arose this New City—
shopping malls & car parks

father passing me
on the down escalator—
dead these forty years

the jaunty air
of a tramp in the terminus
glum with business types

lawns & rustic seats
at the edge of town gardens
birches about to burst

the neglected graves
in Earlsfield cemetery
compared with the new...

recovering at
the bottom of a grey day—
smell of new-cut grass

taking a deep breath
before entering the house
of my old mother

patches of grass
in suburban gardens—
all the years of caring

Waterloo concourse—
shouting at his mobile phone
in the cold night air

the electric flash
coming into Wimbledon
of District Line trains

three student teachers
carving kids up into years
that will & will not...

open the window
and sniff the air of Surrey
from over the hills

sitting & looking
at mother who sits & looks
at me looking at...

repairing her fence—
four smart blows with a hammer
on galvanised nails

the sun is down now—
a sense of coming winter;
a chill in the air

(HGWells: Joan and Peter)

straight road poplars:
warm October afternoon
& red roofs ahead
(HGWells: Joan and Peter)

the night-bird pours
its ardent melody into
a street lamp's daylight

chewing on her lip
the beautiful woman frowns—
clear blue in winter

tube train full
of young lads from school
brimful of learning

the white of gulls
swooping through plane trees—
tea-time

man with a dustbin
picking up October leaves
on forbidden turf

the train stops nowhere
under clear blue morning skies
in total silence

I paint in the park
& the gardener cuts edges
in my watercolour

2a

Fifteen in Madeira 1998

craning my neck
for a glimpse of the island
rising through clouds

the guide points out
exotic flowers in Latin;
down below frogs croak

stepping off the trail
catching a glimpse of lizards
on a brick stairway

Harry Hinton's house—
the blue Atlantic gleaming
through deserted trees

splendour boarded up
waiting for the next owner
dreamy gardens

pink oxalis
on broken stone pathways
tourists' feet

camelia walk
high above the Atlantic
the wind in the trees

sauntering round
the gardens of Madeira
the sea always in view

following the stream
down through the Monte Gardens
a window on koi

just round the corner
into a cold wet cloud gale
—the abandoned trip

cathedral bells
over the roar of traffic—
street conversations

the buffoon tour guide
talks about returning as
a bright butterfly

on steep hillsides
peasants scrape a living
in sunlight & cloud

after the cloud lifts
hills & the sea
and the silence of streams

dog-barking valley
below the Black Levada
—swifts scream high up



the flying spider
once round my head
& back into the hedge

last dance
of the day
for the ephemeridae

foreign tourists
anxious to be snapped
against domes & statues

brought here
to study old ruins
I stroke a cat

one pigeon preening
on a broken fir-tree stump—
the silence of trees

first snow of the year—
the old scarecrow's buttons
seem drawn tighter

blind man on a bus
bids farewell to the driver
see you soon he says

on the beach at night
only the sound of the waves
and the level sand

two mouse-clicks—
the dead haijin deleted
along with his smile

mist from the river—
great folds envelop the house
in bogus daylight

(James Hanley: Against the Stream)

afternoon tea
up in the slate-coloured hills
sharing the grey sky
(James Hanley: Against the Stream)

cat on the roof
just like all cats
sitting on roofs

horses in a field
standing as if nothing
could move them

under a grey sky
the weathervane bird
becomes greyer

in the rose-garden
a blackbird's aria
amplified by old walls

talking to a toad
I notice carp
deeply trawling

the wrought-iron gate
& the garden beyond—
twittering birds

empty croquet lawn
& long-dead players—
the echo of their mallets

on the broken wall
purple clematis in flower
a shadow moving

the tide:
one way in the morning;
the other just now

privet in flower
the smell
from time to time

during the long heatwave
waking to the sound
of rain from the gutter

she stamps
the pavement
in the manner of a horse

Six from Chile 1999

brief eddy in a stream
under the Andes
snow-capped with sunrise

peasant with rake
contemplates his acres
among poplars

ice-crackling
the chatter of people
glacier-viewing

at the roadside stop
Mount Osorno sliced
in half by cloud

crick in the neck
peering at the Andes
from twenty thousand feet

between islands
comparing this with that
losing the moment



time capsule this way
routinely on the wall
like *to the toilets*

(dream haiku 8th March 2000)

field-corner
moving shadows of leaves
in tractor tracks

isolated farmhouse
down in the valley
red-roofed by sunlight

two dogs run
the park perimeter
in & out of mist

bare-armed cellist—
her turning the page strikes
a more delicate chord

hidden in the town
something I could make my own
—known but forgotten
(*Rose Macaulay: Towers of Trebizond*)

people know about
quite different things—makes
conversation hard
(*Rose Macaulay: Ibid*)

looking past the book
in which the desert sand burns
—snowy landscape

Xmas over
Supermarket talk
turns on the New Year

in the iron-bed shop
after the deal is agreed
I suppress a yawn

total eclipse
feeling very primitive—
a glass of moon-water

reading about brains:
a slight tingling down the spine
buzzing in the head

water furrows
as far as the horizon
a lowering sky

is it the next stop?
his affirmative causes her
to paint her lips mauve

a slight fall of snow
& everywhere in the park
people take photos

at Cambridge station
all the lights go out
clicks & snowfall

house in the trees
by a lake
by the railway

the one man band
asks if anybody else
might fancy a go

in at the south door—
just as the organ
rises from the deep

comes from outer space
with news about his homeland
—the comet salesman
(dream haiku)

yesterdays' bonfire
drifts into my dreams
—woodpigeon dawn

sunset stretches
the long level landscape
into thunder

peacock butterfly
in at the open window
round the room & out

at the tired computer
my sleeping finger writes
a line of ////////////////////////'s

bombers overhead...
the clatter of butterfly wings
in the lavender

mallow & willow;
the grey sky of evening—
cello concerto

unfinished house—
short-sleeved figures
at the sawing of wood
(John Galsworthy: Forsyte Saga I)

chalk-pit sunshine
the murmur of bees—
she flings back her hair
(John Galsworthy: Forsyte Saga III)

first arcade workers:
another pointless day—
the rattle of keys

on to the next thing—
the man of catholic tastes
letting his hair down

she's so much more focussed
the woman on the train says
with her eyes tight shut

driving home at night:
contretemps with a pig—
he notices stars

(John Galsworthy: A Modern Comedy)

the sensation you feel
when hearing a blackbird
in trees' first blossom

(John Galsworthy: ibid)

the head gardener
with a spud in his hand
good afternoon sir

(John Galsworthy: ibid)

the one-legged man
comes most afternoons & plays
on a poor fiddle

(John Galsworthy: ibid)

a little sleet drifts
from a sky the colour of
gravestones under yews
(John Galsworthy: ibid)

walking on pebbles—
silver birches
round the church tower

woman behind a newspaper
keeps on talking about
a picture he can't see

admiring each other:
the girl on the Underground
and her reflection

outside a blackbird—
inside a speech in a language
I don't understand

as I grow older—
rejoicing at sunrises
over the wide field

in the hornbeam hedge
at the edge of the forest
a blackcap singing

(Siegfried Sassoon: Sherston's Progress)

some oxen hauling
a tree and a boy standing
looking at a train

(Siegfried Sassoon: ibid)

dark masses of woods;
stars among a few thin clouds—
distant bombardments

(Siegfried Sassoon: ibid)

sun in a clear sky;
in the orchard where I sit
lengthening shadows

(Siegfried Sassoon: ibid)

10.30 moonlight
hawthorn scents & glimmerings
& nightingale songs

(Siegfried Sassoon: ibid)

sunlit countryside
swept by the coursing shadows
of great white clouds—larks

(Siegfried Sassoon: ibid)

reading
about the common cold—
twice I sneeze

girl with a black dog
by the side of a river—
long evening shadows

I hug my old mum
remembering how she looked
in an old photo

Naples & I must
supply the world with noodles
says the Lorelei

(Jung's account of a schizophrenic's ramblings)

dark night
listening for the distant clock—
willing five chimes

up the staircase
portraits of the ancestors
the creaking of floorboards

(at Nostell Priory)

the great crabs wrapped up
in a thick mantle of fog—
a wink between friends

(JPSartre: Childhood of a Leader)

pre-dawn meteor show—
kneeling at the window
for two hours

boxer dog in Cadiz
hell for leather
on the silver sand

Cadiz Cathedral—
a disorderly choir
of cleaning ladies

shadow of a bird
swooping perpendicular—
Bayeux Cathedral

dog in a cave
barks at dark echoes
and his dream of sea

as they empty his urn
over the cliff—a gust of wind
blows from the sea

rainbow circles
the squawking of crows
just for a moment

chrome yellow field
above Ludlow town
drab after sunlight

a Greek island sense
of unplanned mystery:
hairpin bends & heat

beefly
on mayflower—
lagoon beyond

shaven-headed man
raises his newspaper
between pointed ears

when I'm dead & gone
don't sit round in a circle
reading my haiku

distant loud-speaker
speaks to somebody
down a different tunnel

five golfers
weave between the dripping trees
towards afternoon

quiet of the rush-hour
tube-train pausing
between stations

bonfire & rainstorm
drifting across the far field
tall grey clouds

the fisherman's line
disappears in still water—
storm-clouds approaching

reading about
the function of dreams
I find my eyelids drooping

in mid-argument
I become
a Beethoven symphony

dog & stick
what more could you want
along the sea-edge?

yachts in the Sunday bay—
at the edge of their sea
the big dog walks

round the bay
the hills
of my boyhood
(Weymouth)

figures on a beach
walking in October sun
with dogs & pushchairs

boy in a sand-pool
wriggling to sink his toes deep
peering at blue sky

night-tide
a shoal of silver leapers
disappears

gardens in autumn
settling down to emptiness
the buzz of chainsaws

by the bullrushes
waiting for poems
warm wind in her face

in the abbey porch
a swirl of dead leaves
& a quick chorus of rooks

thank you very much
dad with a hole in your back
to let the ball through
(Dream haiku 20th November 2003)

for five whole minutes
before the march sets off
I dream of socialism

the shivering leaf
on a street where the wind blows
once in a life-time

beyond the seaflats
a line of light stretches up
to the rising sun

following the path
into the bird-loud wood
—a quick getaway

in pensive mood—
the incessant rigmarole
of blackbird alarm

out of the crowd's noise
a single voice comes to me—
I regard distance

caught in a word-net
the sun
through trees

through a spider's web
Orion—his belt's buckle
the jumpy spider

and in the morning
the spider rebuilds its web
around the sunrise

deserted mountain—
riding on a dragon
leaping mountain clouds

by the bramble gate
diligent in solitude
the moon lingering

autumn evening—
two cats sat by a white door;
long in sadness

(25th September 2004)

watching clouds
I forget the curling & unfolding
of hunger & thirst

whistling
the long day
before I lost a front-tooth

sharply indrawn breath
when the storyteller says
in a dark valley...

in this floating world
the banks float on the river
which floats on the sky

now I'm flying white—
the mountain ash
being spring green

trying out the key
at every house in town—
the desperate wife

back field—bright moon
glows behind clouds:
autumnal thoughts

houses where others live—
neatly-mown lawns & carefully
tended flowerbeds

hills & trees hidden
in fog—railway station
& the waiting dead

in the seaside café
she writes a poem about
long seaside sadness

getting to the bottom line
just on midnight—
survival of self

rich brown & formless
the place I always get to
when all else fails

tired of my self
I step into other lives
on the Underground

in the darkening square
mother & child wonder
about going home

plane leaf & puddle
at the grey end of the year
puddle & plane leaf

noticing the fish
that is never really there
winter solstice

no words now
all deleted
on the shortest day

tock of second-hand—
in the space
a Sunday silence

in dreams
wandering the passageways
we never took

sliding sideways
the yellow house
under this snow

long valley
full of birdsong—
emptiness

deep water
under the swaying footbridge
moss-covered stones

between the river
and the hills of yesterday
—so much loving time

the shadow that walks
beside me in this cow trail
I'll never shake off

from over the hill
coming back to this valley
again and again

house by the river—
all its watery
windows open

rushing water
clearer than clear intention
this green afternoon

footprints by the riverside
that might have been hers
fifty years since

at the hill-top
another glimpse of the river
silently gushing

coming to this place
reminds me that everywhere
is memory

on the early train
she eats yoghurt with a spoon
and averts her eyes

plentiful orchids
I pretend an interest
half-way up Box Hill

the sound of fireworks
shooting up beyond the trees
—just look at the moon
(19th November 2005)

at Cambridge the train
fills with intelligentsia
scribbling in notebooks

fields in morning light
limp hangover of darkness
& grey smoke drifting

larks high in air
long gestures of summer
entrance & dumbfound

trails in the frost
a house under a blue sky
shut in behind trees

thick moss
under my long stride
to the green field end

the edge of the world
often repeating itself;
many horizons

the darkening hills
all down this haunted valley—
I rummage the past

don't talk about mist
and sheep me no sheep today—
what hills did she walk?

(at Kettlewell)

between sleep
& relative consciousness
the whirring of wings

during the seminar
two conversations start up—
I tune out from both

curlews before dawn
heave me into
another dream

I remembered all:
the long wall of the old farm;
empty threshing floor
(ex Fernando Pessoa: The Book of Disquiet)

my sadness out there
in the street strewn with boxes:
oh for distant lands

(after Fernando Pessoa: ibid)

insubstantial dawn!
the everyday things of life
simply brushing by

(after Fernando Pessoa: ibid)

in a gentle voice
he is singing a brief song
from some far-off land

(after Fernando Pessoa: ibid)

the green of smooth grass
a park on the edge of dusk
wanting nothing more

(after Fernando Pessoa: ibid)

the lowering clouds—
returning to what I am;
to what dream I am

love
a sickness
on this grey morning

morning light
on the hill the shadows
fall the other way

moon—its hard sad light
resembles thanks
nobody can hear
(after Fernando Pessoa: op cit)

in the nearby trees
the company of darkness
impenetrable

fields & distant woods
long-time tilled & coppiced
—the generations

where sky meets far hills
the crack & the shimmering
and the tall pillars

ridges of mountains
stacking up in shades of grey
& the foaming waves

(Dunoon to Gourock)

doppelganger:
grey beard on a motorbike
just as determined

small plants
taking root in ancient flint walls
—the usual wood-pigeons

loud wood-pigeons
darkness moving towards dawn—
what else is there?

August afternoon
after showers—evening primrose
leans into the light

at Berrington Hall:
the whizz of damsel flies
& distant train horns

a fine evening:
sun shadows through the windows
& the taste of mint

café musik:
indistinguishable words
—passing shadows

film-star pose:
she takes off her dark glasses
to look at the hoi polloi

spider strands
from the house
to my dark workshop

evening starlings
make an unholy racket
on the church roof

her grey paradise—
a step towards his release;
let himself be led

(after Milan Kundera: The Joke)

for so many years
his body lines this valley
for her to trample on

by a northern shore
she sorts coloured pebbles
from the devastation

close-wrapped in her thought
on a distant shore tossing
pebbles to fortune

for years I've wanted
to return to innocence—
no thought & no words

on the phone she says
see you whom I haven't seen
for many a year

suddenly the sun
through thick morning mist
dark tree columns

the narrow backstreet
concert room indicated
by a tatty flag

anguish of sunlight
when the people you wait for
don't turn up on time

through sunshine & shower
ephemeridae skit like
there's no tomorrow

just stepping out there
into the mild autumn night
—I stretch my arms high

across grey cloud
a lone bat
in the dusk

a swoop of sparrows
down through the silver birches
up into the sky

on first waking up
I wonder what the time is
for a good half-hour

in the florist shop
her tinkling laughter amongst
the chrysanthemums

deep winter blueness
beyond the yellowing leaves
distant chapel bell

where wars are started:
the playing fields in Eton
—deserted goal-mouths

sun just rising
illuminating clouds
—the banana skin

a field of white cows
& the distant cathedral
with a setting sun

cutting the tall hedge
all this summer afternoon
re-arranging sky

cementing a path
lifting slabs for beetles—
fingers burning

long-dead Roman souls
stone upon stone upon stone
all for Hadrian

white horse running
against a grey evening sky
late drifts of sunlight

the dripping cistern;
far away a ring of trees—
I centring myself

urban landscape sounds
draining layer by layer
to a flight of gulls

dog insistently
while the street is waking up—
the call to prayer

sharpening scissors
in the rising of the tide
to cut the wind up

half an ear to hear
these complex conversations
attend to the chairs

dog with her head curled
on the torn sofa cushion
—the conversation

tall silver birches
whiteline the darkening wood
in evening mist

on waking early
stars and a half moon
all to myself

the kitchen spider
moves overnight—one corner
to the opposite

in the village hall
a butterfly roams its space—
settles on a head

Five in Denmark January 2008

a cabinful of statues
waiting for the cabin doors
to unlock themselves

he stops from digging
to watch the slow train passing—
a stroke of the brow

the empty playground
in the ice-cold of winter—
swing gently swaying

end of the railway—
wind in an empty subway
on towards evening

meeting from the train—
hug above a winter sea:
the warmth of her lips



beyond the breakers
just the sky
rising & falling

night pours its darkness
into my orifices
& I become night

Charles Wain glittering—
the open bedroom skylight
frames seven neatly

in the wide blue sky
the clouds & a passing mood
a feather falling

fields & distant woods
a long time tilled & coppiced
—the generations

she extols silence
and expends a million words
in explaining why

after the wedding
confetti washed away
by a thunderstorm

shadows of jasmin
ending in sunlight
on the green garden shade

after the goodbye
sitting amongst falling
jasmin blossoms

end of the garden—
pigeons on the roof look down
at me looking up

before I fall asleep
still stubbornly persistent
—the dead city

sentinel woman
with a beatific smile
watches me writing

on the cold top deck
people snapping everything
in the sudden sun

this is the island
with meadowsweet & fox gloves
now floating away
(Isle of Mull)

green foam wake
leaves the distance far behind
—island with lighthouse

the ferry returns
where islands have disappeared
—rattling of train wheels

in the covered pier
people who've been for the day
& a barking dog

sea-gull deadly still—
the small boy is not impressed
by its quiet quiver

after the sea-trip
the café window still moves
along the harbour
(Oban)

starlings gathering
on the ponderous fence-wire
—the movement of sea
(Dream haiku)

past the silver hills
& into silver Dunoon
on the silver waves

distance:
hills beyond hills
shimmering

a variegated cat
in its own courtyard—
all tickle

I hear only this end
of their mobile argument—
a sparrow hops by...
(on Ely Station)

jay
on a bare apple-tree branch
starting sleet

dusk—
the sound of cellos
from stained glass windows

ducks hauled up
the long ramp of air
by their stretched necks

early autumn
sunshine brings out
the best of women

an explanatory hand
thrusts out from the bench
on my left

seascape
full of the flapping
of hungry gulls

his bag of bits gone
he says sorry
to the long queue of gulls

a sheeny squad
of baby starlings
out on an afternoon stroll

from mid-morning
till teatime the sea
slides into land

stretching my eyes
over the sound of the sea
cliff pier & pub seat
(Walton-on-the-Naze)

holding her eye
over his wife's shoulder—
another life

reading & writing
on a sunny autumn morning
—last apples

poppy!
painted glass with the sun
shining through

in silence now I cut paper
with my dead mother's
dress-making scissors

Ely water-meadows—
broken willow hulks
& the walking of dogs

from this platform
Mrs Urgency with a trolley
strides to that platform

winter
and the unmade nests
of crows come to light

elegant beauty dreams
out of the train window
sun in her eyes

woodpecker pecking
the side of the tree
away from the house

through the hedge:
new perspectives
more statues

from the abbey front door
an oblong lawn;
woodland horizon

small girl
quits the path direct & heads
for the Land of Faerie

mill-pond
too frozen for ducks
striped with tree shadows

path by the side
of the walled garden
—blackbird swoop

three horses in a field
frozen into shape
by last night's frost

waiting-room—
woman sneezes as though
you have to go 'atishoo'

in this novel
the morning is half-over
& so it is for me now

sunlight moves
past the settled swans
into my eyes

at the field centre
he waits for his dog
who overtakes him standing

alone with the sun
on the book I'm reading
—distant line of poplars

with closed eyes
the room dark—
long weed in a lake

(Henry Green: Loving)

caught in the reflection
of spring sunlight the cobweb
made of gold

(Henry Green: Loving)

a dust-wrapped dimness
and the sound of a waltz
—dry bones of roses

(Henry Green: ibid)

dreams
held by hairs of gold
binding her head

(Henry Green: ibid)

rainbow
on a shower
blowing in from the sea

(Henry Green: ibid)

male pigeon
strutting puffed-up desire
—sodding pest she thinks

two girls in purple
dancing—multiplied to eternity
in mirrors

(Henry Green: Loving)

he opens his eyes
to the fluttering of doves
at her shoulders

(Henry Green: ibid)

mushroom differences
growing
between them

(Henry Green: ibid)

reaching for the latch
—a bullock's horn
bound in bronze

(Henry Green: ibid)

the afternoon dark
with a storm outside—
polished copper jug

(Henry Green: ibid)

tracing patterns
on the window-pane
with a purple finger-nail
(Henry Green: Loving)

something hard & glittering
in the stone-age
under blue-rinsed tresses
(Henry Green: ibid)

not wishing
to be observed
he stops watching the roses
(Henry Green: Back)

in a dream
the queen came to tea
& admired my library

the sun rises
& everything changes
but remains the same

the train goes over
the wide sea estuary—
I look to see who looks out

pausing while drawing back
velvet curtains to admire
her own white hands
(Henry Green: Concluding)

this new day
stretching on till night—
violins & the dance
(Henry Green: ibid)

the sun aslant
between trees & smoky light
—blue shadows sideways
(Henry Green: ibid)

whispers
a cloud passing the moon
at night
(Henry Green: ibid)

sun makes the goose
into a blaze of white
in its rush

(Henry Green: Concluding)

soft breeze
swaying curtains
with regret

(Henry Green: ibid)

dust motes in sunlight
now day is done—
the left overs

(Henry Green: ibid)

hundreds of starlings
roar into the lonely elm
and burst into sound

(Henry Green: ibid)

thinking
she'd said something
he was too deaf to hear

(Henry Green: ibid)

broken bird's egg—
the evening sky
precisely matching its blue
(Henry Green: Concluding)

small boy lingers
on the station platform
for 8 to 10 up

choosing to stand
in a dazzle of sunlight
—frost at my back

on the gramophone
the conductor thirty years dead
taps his baton
(Henry Green: Concluding)

you simply can't tell
just by looking
at people
(Henry Green: Ibid)

endlessly the dance
across warm fields
of autumn leaves

(Henry Green: Concluding)

cold hum of violins
in sharp moonstruck
window glass

(Henry Green: Ibid)

lovers
sampling
moonlight

(Henry Green: Ibid)

she thinks it must seem
her hand on his shoulder
his heart's white flower

(Henry Green: Ibid)

cattle
part of the mist
unidentifiable in rain

(Henry Green: Caught)

sails revealed
by a beacon on foothills
above a dark ocean
(Henry Green: Caught)

dull light of autumn
when rain threatens
the late afternoon
(Henry Green: Ibid)

alone in the carriage
feet up his back
to the whirling dark
(Henry Green: Ibid)

moth dabbing
its own shadow
many kisses
(Henry Green: Ibid)

so drunk
as not to realise
that others are sober
(Henry Green: Ibid)

disentangling
the magic beanstalks
in my head

(Henry Green: Caught)

the same unease
as when in March summer
seems to be tomorrow

(Henry Green: ibid)

lifted
in a balloon—
the scent of roses

(Henry Green: ibid)

mangy kitten
swiping at flies—
the cod's head

(Henry Green: ibid)

gaping throats
fringed by green gaps for teeth
bellowing with laughter

(Henry Green: ibid)

laughter
dark eyes lapped
with melted ice
(Henry Green: *Caught*)

very late
under brilliant stars—
will she ever come?
(Henry Green: *ibid*)

his eyes wander out
to cream-yellow sunlight
on ungrowing winter grass
(Henry Green: *ibid*)

singer singing
of what goes on
at all times
(Henry Green: *ibid*)

a woman dressed
as if in diamonds
fathoms under the sea
(Henry Green: *ibid*)

the manor clock chimes—
swallows living in holes
along the river squeak

(Henry Green: ibid)

mistaking objects
in the moonlight—
one person for another

(Henry Green: ibid)

snow—
behind the forehead
an aching emptiness

(Henry Green: ibid)

moon fixed in sky
without cloud
flooding with intolerance

(Henry Green: ibid)

moonlight—
in the radiance
triangular sapphire shadows

(Henry Green: ibid)

changing
everything
by going over it
(Henry Green: Pack My Bag)

suddenly noticing
a rainbow far-off
I imagine the feel of rain

the lesser roar of birches
between roaring sycamores
—bold March wind

windows
catching the sun and boys
running through low doorways
(Henry Green: Pack My Bag)

imagining women—
dream of far lands;
the mystery of latitude
(Henry Green: Pack My Bag)

sepulchres
trailing
ivy

amen to the ledge
where church bats crap before
entering their roof-space

where the river bends
four long-ago pollarded alders
and a dog

the little hawthorn hedge
newly planted
for concealment

house across the valley
through sheep & bullrushes
and freezing wind

he & I shadows
joined by a footbridge rail—
river surface pose

with each step
the pain of a hill
the boy in me resents

through the haiku-reading
the King Charles snores
appreciation

the urge to leap through
enchanted rainbows
& terrifying thunder-clouds

to the lighthouses
now the blackthorn's out—geese from
one to the other

tall windows
leaning against rain
—dark bookcases
(Henry Green: Doting)

one buzz round
the summerhouse
and the bumblebee's away

spring evening
in a small back garden
heavy blue clouds
(Henry Green: Living)

daffodils on a table
in the backroom
with ferns in a vase
(Henry Green: Living)

sitting outside
in the sun's last light
which had shone all day long
(Henry Green: Living)

for a moment the wind
ruffling the moat becomes
the wind in the trees

figures photographed
isolated upon a lawn
—Last Year at Oxburgh Hall

shadows of trees
swivel round the lawn;
clatter of crockery

on a barn ridgetile
robin twirrelling fit to bust
out of its small beak

desperate not to leave
a gap in the conversation
— *great!* he says & *brilliant!*

the ticking of the clock
—apple blossom
before dawn

mid-afternoon
wishing for warm sheets
& nocturnal pillows

at my desk
on Election Day I count
my collection of pebbles

sun-drenched shutters—
throwing them wide
on a sun-drenched sea

5th month so soon:
lilac in the dooryard
endlessly shrinking years

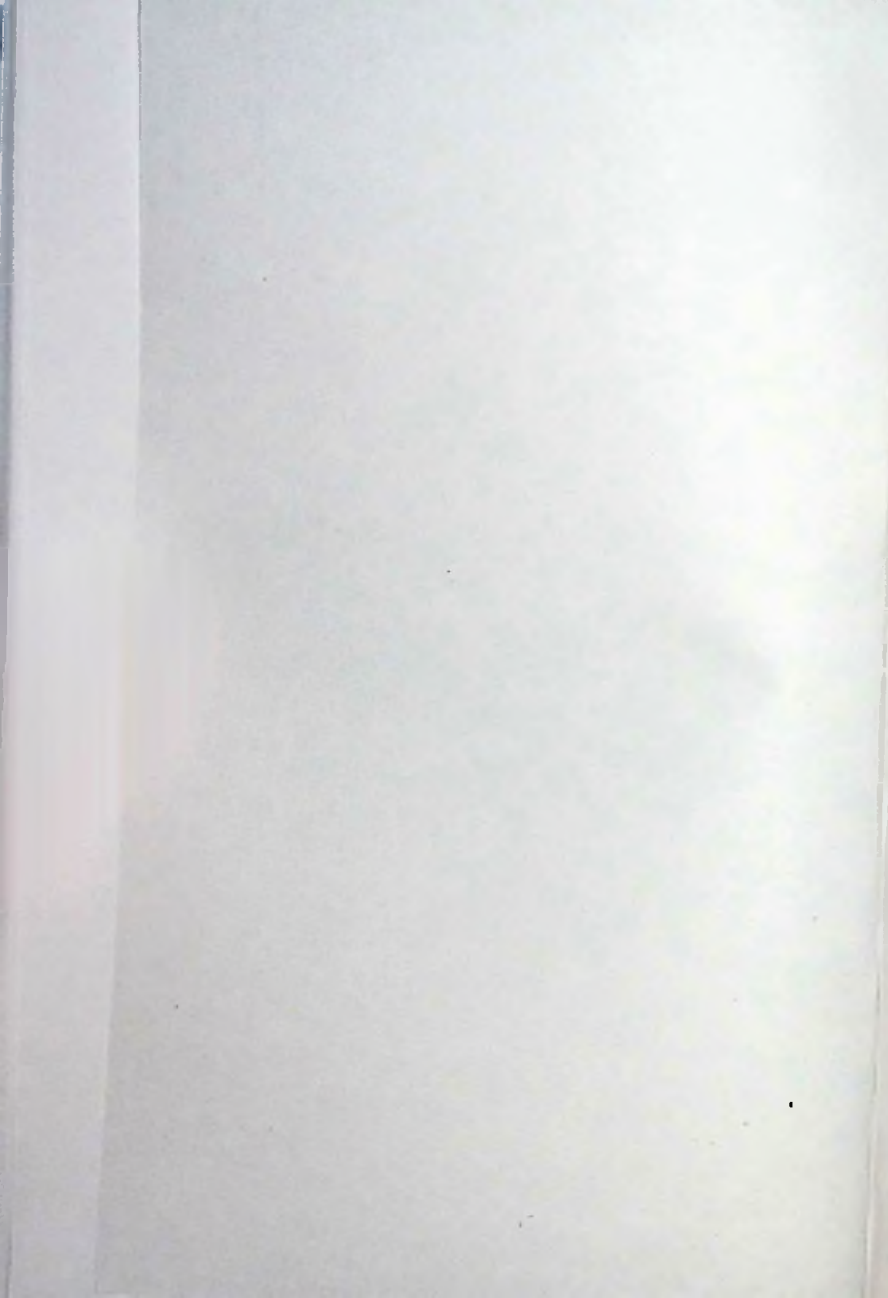
the taking of the first census in 1900
— paper distributed and all
before then —

Investigation — Biological Survey
waiting for more information
in the year 1900 to 1901

at the desk
on the desk
the collection of specimens for study

sun-drenched
showing the
on a sun-drenched

7th month
also in the
and the



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