

FIELD TREASURE

The peel of a field mushroom
velvet satin, satin velvet
curls with the pressure of pull.
Its thick skin reveals
brown cream, cafe mocha latte;
irresistible not to touch.
I stroke and savour its scent
far more worth than Guerlain
this wholesome smell of earth.
I rub my tempted fingers
across those dark mushroom gills
the ascension of harp strings
music of a zither resounding
or the guitar that my son sometimes
brings home to me as pure music
filled with tremulo and recall;
always a sigh of growth
the movement of change.
As was music the mushroom alters
when it reaches top pitch, frying
with a succulent squeal of triumph
in the burning hot butter, that fat
slick of boursin, herbs and garlic.
My taste buds swell in anticipation
and I deny the mushroom its earth.

SNOW WOMAN

What must I seem to him
who comes and goes like a snowfall
covering my ground with his soft blanket
and shivering my loneliness away?

I am warm snowman
you may mould me with feathers
snowflakes pressed to my heart
but in the end when I soften
can you save me, can you reach
where my heart once was
or has it slipped away
with the season because
I have melted so well for you
there is nothing left of me.

RYALL

There is a ruffled sweetness
long grass, sifted sunlight
as mist steals over valleys
and tread of dew underfoot
softens smells of waking earth
into the opening of day.

The lowered land is silent
there is a simple stride of cattle
as their steaming bodies amble
from grass to grass, munching
not soundless but leavened
into the drying warmth of day.

Above, the pale emerging light
of stillness breaks a wing flap
first of summer birds swift flight
flit and hover, dive and fall
as swallows catch the early midge
and swoop to greet of day.

MOOR LAND

You have lain all night
on my moss and
soaked in the dew
of my depth. Pale light
curls the moor's breast
with fair lambs now still
as our bodies fed
on grass and earth
and we lie tranquil
as air, breathing
of a morning that opens
to your caress.

HUNTERS MOON

Hunter gatherers are men
disappearing over the horizon
with their energy, their spears.
The huntsman with his fears
tucked under his belt; quiver cased
he bolts the situation, hides
in hedgerow copse, cover dense
his underbrush lying in wait
for freedom to come rushing
no rescue in its wake and
when he stalks his bird
his feathered prey: alert
he snatches and keeps, eats.
Now his quiver soundly sleeps
and he returns, mist slipping
into dawn to face another day.
Hunter gatherers have secrets
tucked under their belts they say.

LANDSCAPE

All those woods and valleys
curves and contours
depths and prominences
tower over me as your body
shadows the sunburst
and clouds the skylight.
Without light there are no tones
without shadow there can be no form
without breath there could be no body
without loving there would be
no transformation into exchanging
giving a body for a body
a spirit for a soul
as a soul giving promises
of no gift and no parting
or sharing, not even starting
that strange word, loving.
No skate, no speed
no slipper, no warmth
no love, love, love
no embrace, no feeling
only cold white on the ceiling
and then beyond –
what is beyond?

KILIMS

Trace my contours into curves
weave me into complex kilims
knot each contrast into colours
wind my heart to bind with yours.
Lay me down as prayer carpet
think to love me long and well.
When the loving then accomplished
fills our eyes, through those doors
in the end a radiance enters
tapestry of Eden's garden
genesis from deepest wells
rising to our sunlit surface
blending with our mingled gender
making one of two bare bodies
naked, godly, simply formed:
unoriginal; terrestrial.

LAST DROPS

You tell me I have received
your last drops, sown
those precious seeds
in the furrows of my life,
thoughts my germination
as natural as for Ruth from Boaz
may reap of the best corn
from such distant fields.

Now, like a hollowed out elephant
your ruined body stands
and trembles in its weakness.
Gone are those last drops,
desire for life's leaps
and you sway, desolate,
a drought and famine
devouring your frame..

ST JOHN'S PASSION

'Why hast thou forsaken me'
oh my lover, earthly spirit
that gives onto a distant past
which death takes us away?

Where do we then meet our God
heavenly experience, now our bliss
that last one of final breath
into the unknown of our days?

Who, by what do we wait here
in shivering fear that is our doubt
if not for a father's love
original embrace, early trust?

When all is gone, finished, over
we only exist as inspired thought
having followed the great experience
allowing inevitable death of life.

It will be the end of passion
oh my love, my earthly love
we will no longer need each other
cool as air, calm spirit's soul.

NIGHTFALL

As dusk sweeps its beauty
over all our lives and hearts
the calm of earth descends
into a universe of nothing
greater than the loath to leave.
Achieved, a veil of welcome death
gently covers our grey grief
which mattered once, now lightly
sheds importance into soil and dust
as dusk slips over, earths up well
and slides into the water of our birth
an amniotic flow, a river's course
our boat into an unknown sphere
we do not know until experience
takes us ferrymen out rowing there:
once and for all, for ever more.

LOSS

When I today remember that dear face
my heart opens and will surely die
as, lying here, I feel too deep a grace.
I long to cry but cannot even try
when tears are dry as noon on summer riverbeds
without their god can dream of water.
Cracked hard with mud, striated hollows shiver,
gape the sunken gaze, plead moisture's alter
in parched relief from rain. The splendid nights
of moonlight shadows darken down as peace,
touch to close my lids till mourning lifts
high heaven's new day; a melody, a lease
of instrumental brilliance to play
and differ in a different love-god's way.

CHAIR

My dear, when you sat there
during our contented time,
reversed what was content
to misanthropic near despair.
Instead of joy you sought
the pointlessness of time
or effort and no point:
believed you wished to die
then stated that to be afraid
of death renewed the need to live
and anyway some fear of leaving
was far worse than agony of living.
To my surprise, though not without chagrin,
I found that I was looking at the chair.

THE BEST OF HIMSELF

The best of himself: Himself.
His brain does not know himself
as well as he does. Contrarily
he may be wrong, his brain the wiser.
His smile, his loving pleasure
at seeing us surround his chair
'Why am I here?' or worse, he
no longer minds the here nor there.
Yet present passes well and warm
he is himself, our minds his memory
of all that once was valiant, grand
magnanimous and worldly wise.
Then I look deep into his fading eyes
and know that, as he once told me,
'You've had the best of me'
I know: the best of himself.

STRANGER

He came round the doorpost
a shadow light, ominous
or so I thought.
Shivers followed his footsteps
down my spine and settled
huddled in my stomach.
I froze: he walked
but was he nearer
or did he slide through me
demanding presence, absorption?
Overwhelmed and desperate
I slid to the floor begging forgiveness:
then he walked back over me again
and his shadow retreated
behind the still open door.

MUNCH'S FRIEZE

I think I dreamed of you last night
in a rough and turbulent sea:
not for you that I howled so well
nor you, but inside for me.
With a scream which lay still
on a far distant shore
while foam around me flowed free,
the sun set in with daggers of red
streaking the flight of the sea:
as shrouds they bled,
they bled, they bled
and despair set into me.

But I lay down on that distant shore
head deep in hands with thought
until night was full spent
and so calm the lament
as it entered my soul once more.
Then you really came back to sing
the most beautiful song to me,
'Let our love be as free
set it free, set it free
let our love be as loose as the sea.'
I woke glad to have dreamed of you,
a billowing white bird by the sea.

CHIAROSCURO

Peel a black man
and you have a white one.
Insult: why should a black man
have a white interior, he needs it black
Should a white man be black inside?
Just as insulting as an inner darkness
mysterious and devoid of light.
But we are not all black or white
a chiaroscuro of myth and mystery
neither can fathom because to be human
is not race nor history: just fact.
Maybe the black man has an extra
advantage over the white one?
He dares to cry more easily
his embrace gives a warmth
lacking inhibition: he is not cold.
He does not have to be defrosted
as his ice melted long ago
in rich forests beyond memory
and yet...
he opens his hands like a black lily
and their petals are pink inside.
He has pride, he has centre,
his tears flow and weep as ours weep.
Can we share a while and be black?

SERENADE

If I weave graceful rhythms on the cello
this violinist dances round me in an ornament of grace.
When I resound the rumble of my ancient voice
he titillates my playing with runs escaping space.
And all the while Schubert, our absent playmate
waves his wand, conducts releasing measures;
quavers, grace notes as, with hollowed resonance
our bows and fingers spell expression to the sounds.
But it is essential that when Schubert overtakes
we re-invent his musical direction. Now he smiles
closes his warm manuscript and knows full well
all he inspired in his short life has been worthwhile.

EUROSTAR

We slid into the tunnel
like silken intercourse
inevitably smooth: luxurious
enveloping with its sure caress
into an inexperienced journey.
We were now the forceful male
our tunnel the enclosing womb.
There was no visible movement
only a gently slipping forward
persuasive, and enticing soft
communion sounds of passengers
giving confidence, witness to the act.

We were not just actors
passive entering as collusion
but more as onlookers sharing
no voyeurism yet captive fact
carried on the new submarine
our Star of Europe weaving
a shuttle through the weft of sea.
By modern engineering, this comet
is trailing a link through our Britain
inevitably mating European France
in an impressive Entente Cordiale:
the intercourse of a smooth seducer?

HAS BEEN

Measureless is time
memorable of moments
catching immortality
transience of possession
as a bird flutters in hand
and struggles to get away;
or leaves swing round capricious
poised to be caught either way.
Collect those leaves that have fallen
the petals which soon fade away
hold onto the pollen that lingers
kiss moments of instants today.
Just as each kiss as it passes
hides into recall and replay
there is nothing to save or to keep
except now and the obvious, this day.
No possession of all that continues
no capture of what flies away
we live by the truth of 'what has been'
treasure our lives while we say
'These I have caught are our moments
when we lay in each other's embrace
saying 'love you, love you each day'
yet already their echo floats away.
So closely we hold onto each other
almost silent, whispering to pray
that these moments will stay
longer than just for today.

AURA

We made love
among the ghosts
the bracken and the ivy
we lived our present in the past
as past crept into our bones.

There was no light
except the twilight line
on far distant hills
with near trees outlined
in no moon's aura.

We shut our eyes to darkness
allowing light to enter
our bodies as we in turn
entered each other's bodies
and reached for ourselves.

There we parted in sadness
they were still separate
and single we dreamed
of soft beds and duvets
no wood hardened floor

Longing for the clean touch
which could transmute souls.