

Seahorses

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Seahorses

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To Joy, Tom and Graham.

SEAHORSES

SEAHORSES

Hopes are
seahorses,
elegant urchin.

Bubbles in glasses
treble clefs.

There's a spring
of them bursting
Ka-pow-ing daily.

Despite the
furrows
in my face.

CLOCKWORK SCORPION

I dreamed I had
a clockwork scorpion
who scuttled slowly
about my limbs
in black shiny armour.

Japanned like
a sideboard,
rock hard
in my hands
but friendly
as a budgie
on my shoulder,
a remotely controlled
conversation piece.

Upturning
this black turtle
I switched
my new pet off
at the belly battery
like a walkie-talkie doll.

But the scorpion
who gained
in confidence and stealth
chattered and spun
quickly around the room
too fast to track
with the naked eye.

Rally driving
claw clicking
snap-jawed
a set of false teeth
incising
across carpet.

Then taking
to flight
it launched itself
at my neck
and knocked me
clean off my feet.

SPIKED ON A SPINDLE

Meeting on
the street
to listen to you
and watch your
large lip quiver
succulently
(from wetting
the skein my prince
from whetting
the thread)
spiked on a spindle
you pay the ferryman
and dream of a
moonlit crossing.

THE VIRAGO

They knitted corn dollies
and pentagrams
in their spare time
and cast spells
on visiting tradesmen

blowing them off roofs
or rolling gas
bottles at them
splintering fingers
in slammed doors

those two sisters
darning up fate
like odd socks
stretched across
knobbly fingers

making effigies in wax
and talking
with familiars,
malevolently

scheming termagants
sharing the eye
in liver spotted hands
and leaving
woven misery
on boilers.

HALE-BOPP

Projecting a dusty beam
At the earth's cinema;
A falling snowball
Waiting to be caught.

You open your bright eye
at us but never wink.

A hole in the sky
spraying an iridescence
of question about you.

Your two tails sail
on the tide of felicity
around the cosmic pancake
which is your heart.

A dropped scone
in the night sky.

BUCEPHALUS

Positively prehistoric.
Arched on all fours
in the rays of the moon.

Cancroid limbed.
Sprouting hair
then elongating,
Wolf-snouting.

Bison backed and
heavy shouldered
painted onto cave-walls
in the dance of flame.

Spear carrying nomad
Bedouin Boudicca.
Bucephalus
beneath thigh.