

Back of A Vast

Also by Mark Goodwin

Else

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Mark Goodwin

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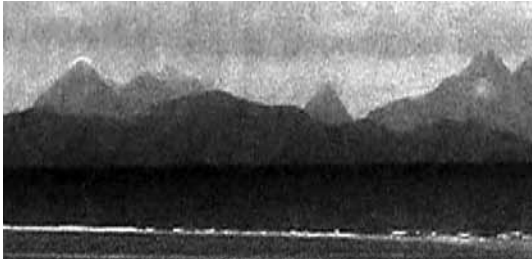
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for Chris, and for Brian

DISTANCE A SUDDEN



My Warm Bedding Cools to Moor

but I am not unsheltered nor chilled this little
bothy condenses its weight of stone blocks

wooden beams slate tiles the bothy clings to
land under wind it is bravery in it & from in it

my body & heat spread peacefully out to the sweet
danger my arms & legs stretch kilometres in an

instant some me grows as a slow map sleepiness
pulls my heat to laser through shadows expands

my confines to concentrate distances reeds tussocks
rocky knolls winter red -twigged birches black peat

-water dried grasses snow -silvered ridges & mountain
flanks icicles moon behind speedy whisps of frayed

sky faint platinum lochans cliffs white twirling strands
& filaments of streams steaming falls all spread through

my bedding stretch my flesh & bones wide & tight
through & across miles of wild ground around this

foetal house I drift my stillness in

A Bout of Walking

original abroad aboriginal step from manicured

Oz's track to preserved Native Australian hands
blown on stone red or black smokey edges behind
an iron cage I into the rockery of/for snake-song

& spidery venom eve light is a grease on eucalypts
light edges the ages so ages vibrate brand new I
am careful to leave clues for my return this cracked

landscape of granite blocks is labyrinth I leave a giant
burnt matchstick above the wall back to modern time
a big thick singed twig how the mouth of fire has spoken

here: yelled up against distant cities where whites
tremble in black dreamtime dark roos boing away
like energetic monks genuflecting repeatedly to distance

I see how such land gives birth to aboriginal imagi
nations Geriward ground now ever kissing Victoria's
amused skin pulling bones up to sunlight like fresh

green shoots for fire I am alone as Sun flattens hot
egg across wide sky-ground sinks into ground-sea Moon
but my nape is home to count less barefoot dancers

travelling like water white drops of paint spatter on me
laughter well milked cairns sag peopled faces creased
as granite beards thick & black as night time eucalypts

this whole Geriward garden rockery portraits brains lit

Borrowdale Details

soft larch needles I sniff wish thin dangling larch twigs hold
raindrops christ & pagan wrapped to tinsel autumn light
has projected Borrowdale's matter a work crafts growth I

peer at a twig's knuckles a needle's green edge a tiny globe
dissolving landscape Borrowdale is a mass of details full
a vastness of minuscule high resolution beauty immense

numbers of bits of leaf-frames pebbles daddylongleg claws
for an instant I spread let a moment explode as I climb
through woods by crags every detail of me follicle bone-cell

grease shatters or slicks amongst Borrowdale's infinite
tiny details one of my gasps stretches wetly with the beck
others entwine with white fibres of gills unravelling gravity

the calcium atoms of my teeth jumble along drystone walls
moss green-gleaming my meal of Herdwick meat passes
through my gut whilst Borrowdale's details digest my soul

Kynance Guessed

a cup of sea please a ship slips a window
pane fractured triangular pillars Asparagus

Bishop Gull Bellows sail-line-white wrinkles
rising to tidal cream-brown rising to black sea

-cleaned Serpentine rising to must ard green
lichen & a silvery sea-gull-shit-streak frayed

Lizard's gentle torments torment il heath er
louse wort yel low rattle hissy clatter of sud

den drizzle pas sing to darken a pebble a cup
of sea I sip at land's serrated edge a ship slips

glass a pane of tight sea smooth clear between
teeth -white mullions a horizon is miniature in

crystal bending a tempt sea at emptsea a cup
of sea spills past white-painted window latches

smears its spacey glass I swig a container ship's
squeaks its wet finger across a horizon's clean

pane a massive fly crawls over a ship's needle
bow I wake in a cup of curveless glass as a

shiny wake of scratches an in coming tide's
people a soaked mass of straggling beliefs I sip

at sea smiles frowns laughter tears slowly fill a
cove cover over our pebbles are under people

see through humans bending light letting words
evolve like fish an in coming tide's city of

wobbling buildings flowing over sands and
Serpentine rock's child's smacked hand mag

nified down to impacting aeons in a cup of sea
scolds if spilled on flesh's forging a horizon

's ship is as sharp eye-grit night will blink again
st but for now day's blue inflates a warship's grey

prongs & whale carcass hull make agreements
with a cup of sea in which I'm ship-shape dropping

a teaspoon anchor my face reflected in it it shatters
my glass interior with the tiniest vast clunk

Dark Bird with Corner

a rim of a ravine draped with moss
& heather a chough? a dark clotted

part of air her *crock-crock* a beauty
full breaking of sleek sky

-flesh into jagged elsewheres a writhe
of a burn's rubbing rock greased

with sea-bottom greens primeval
evidence water as melted mind ever

falling brain-white thoughts of clouds
running electrically across ground

and down crags a raven's finger
-feathers flutter like a pianist's strangest

dream white water fall-lines with
auroras of hiss-mist behind tangled

birch trunks & leafless branches inky
-slick claws black grappling hooks

sure of nothing a moor running from
a chasm's lips into distance a sudden

drop abhorrent to a ground's khaki
uniform of tussocky bog openness routed

by intricate enclosure a ravine a corner
of a world funnelling reverie at a

back of a vast stage An Teallach a mass
of ground's applause & roar solidified

she rolls her *crock-crock* reply to my are
you a raven? parcels her slippery

blue black twirls downside up flight
moment hangs shiny soot hands of air

a sequin eye inspects our bright
Gore-tex-wrapped shapes her dark sharp

in our eyes unfathomable gladness a vole
trickles over snow swift as sorrow some

very small glass & metal room of our car
parked below is dead to dreaming move

meant a feathered throat & beak scrapes
the in visible corner a

cross close sky

Note: *An Teallach* is a mountain in Wester Ross;
its name means *The Forge*.