Back of A Vast
Also by Mark Goodwin

Else
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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 imaginations
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 yell 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 so aked 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

ified down to imp acting aeons in a cup of sea scolds if spilled on flesh’s forge tting 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 case 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 inter i or 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.