

*The Zechstein Sea*



Patricia Farrell

*The  
Zechstein  
Sea*

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*for Robert Sheppard*





# Straight

straight  
and drained  
and marked by paths  
a slow game  
at any time  
stopped there  
forgot to focus  
ruins sheeted  
hooves muffled

we make this picture  
using only a cigar box  
we can't see this  
without it completing  
in our minds  
of the five legs  
two of them are you

# Practical Philosophy

take an animal into the house  
an alligator or dog  
say one of many different attitudes

above all  
venerate your animal  
with a necessary consideration  
to its reasons

we need to think about the space  
and orientation of this  
our house

we need  
to know  
it is the diet  
sufficiently  
that makes it so  
the existence  
and habitude  
of the animal

evidently

we make choices  
but in the house the animal  
begs space and freedom  
long passages for the dog  
long hours of sleep  
for the alligator

do not sit upon  
the aspirations of  
this dog or alligator

## The Tower of Silence (a-e)

a)

when the throat is cut  
and the voice falls back  
and on the floor  
the things I see when I read aren't real  
the cake shop  
and right next door  
the strange room in the cellar

he calls me 'little friend'  
turning the flesh from inside out  
and each time we died he wept

the earth floats  
on the air  
like a leaf  
are the birds outside the window having fun?

b)

take the word *patient*  
this has to be one thing  
how can I understand  
it also means another

performing the operation in my head  
a notebook appears on the table  
with four pencils beside it

c)

all this

a place arises founded on causation

a conjunction reason

that in the present case

either to suppose some beings exist

or that when the whole is in the whole

the absurdity of the two proves sufficiently

the supposition it resolves

ask me in thirty years and I will say

all this a place

arises founded on

causation a conjunction

reason that in the present case

either to suppose some

beings exist or

that when the whole is in the whole the absurdity of the two

proves sufficiently the supposition it resolves

ask me to walk past the yellow door

and I will say that this is not the same street

d)

common sense was wrong  
salivating more for bread than meat

four pages of fine print  
four hours of step-by-step procedure  
two hundred stitches  
sequentially from health to happiness  
bathed and shaved  
without a drop of blood  
without a single scream

the pebbles placed on graves  
make nothing in the mouth  
ground to sand  
we dribble to get rid of them

the prick of a pin  
the pat of a hand  
starting to say  
more than you can prove  
take one look at the brain  
and throw it away in despair

sing

twenty-five sentimental songs  
about breeding a non-viable food-source  
which breaks its wings in zero gravity

e)

these three interests are related  
the mouth waters  
Little Friend

although they are decapitated  
remember my enchantment  
Little Friend

I learned how to sever  
getting in from the outside world

listen to the electrical activity  
listen through the telephone  
Little Friend

I am nervous with behaviour  
of leaving marks on the future  
Little Friend

problems of life and mind  
just roared with laughter as he does

we're provoking new lines of thought  
cutaneous sensations  
Little Friend

a will to simply intelligence  
the material right juices  
Little Friend



please believe  
I do not exaggerate

falls straight through  
and on the ground  
Little Friend

the nearly perfect possible  
excites me in the normal fashion  
Little Friend

## Snail Climbing

A line of men,  
haphazardly across the field,  
might be refigured  
as nothing left to stand on.  
Or would you retouch their eyes?

The same one is watching.  
He inscribes “snail climbing”  
as he walks across the floor,  
going along with a concept  
that all things are assembles  
of smaller and of smaller,  
all more or less alike.

What kind of day is this?  
Here is all the weather of the world.  
Is that Jesus?  
He will tilt the globe a little  
and maybe you will slide—  
but you will not fall.  
Do you understand?

The last dot contains  
a compact version of the book of ages;  
the law comes down  
from the mountain or the mountain.