Are We Not Drawn . . .
Also by Peter Philpott

The Bishop Stortford Variations
What Was Shown
Some Action Upon The World
Textual Possessions
Are We Not Drawn . . .

PETER PHILPOTT

Shearsman Books
Exeter
Are We Not Drawn . . .

“Are we not drawn onward, we few, drawn onward to new era?”

(Anne Michael, *Fugitive Pieces*)

for Ginie
Book I

The Book of Dawns
are you listening to this
    seriously
what comes here
    catch you
hide you
    ideas of youth echoing
like something out of the Ice Age
    multiple segues sluicing down the piste
if you were listening
    your eyes, your fingertips
on the white open page
    there
can you hear
    me write
here this pen moves
    across the line
light
    moulded & channelled
like meaning
    across
we blow the fill
    and shatter
every morning
    without warning
all the tricks
    you like ’em best
just
    don’t hold your breath here
we are fragile today
    fraxile & fractuous
we’ll take anything that comes
    usually like buses
trundle trundle
    they caught it on the wire
elegance of their points
    cream paintwork & the borough arms
all along the promenade and back
    oh the air fills your lungs
freshly blown
    shattered suburbs go
singing
    the one-way ride
morning light
    to imperfect nostalgia
not
not anything
think in no
way can this be
happening or whatever
the little line of words
breaks
doesn’t matter, no
how it is the voice does it
reaches
the end of that lie
and back
this time
and this
time
this time
this time
not
not really
anything
drawn to dawn
   don’t don
in big rounded letters
   all that emptiness
that assonance & misery
   spattered like a crime scene
CSI Somewhere
   cold, still, unpeopled
wherever you looked
   you heard their voices
loudest I think
   there then
if focused on
   inescapable
also judgement
   played out long
in a fair hand now
   out loud
say it!
   fictive action
onward
a noble name
onward
   redolent of meaning
onward
   and then another
pages ripped out
    this book was never complete
those gaps
    authored in an autistic sort of way
what they led to
    more
but always you see
    difficult
the other side of that tear or break
    what comes again
another
    constantly onward
few images
    those here valueless
got at repeatedly
    gnawed at
better ignored
    I knew it
for you
    the words might break out
like a river in a city
    immediate
you can get out
    like the birds
wheeling over it
    mobile fluxions
and the light
    creeping in
and the self-evident complexity
    internal dialectic
breaks up
    this place at once
new every morning
  nude & mute
mourning
  the light’s sullying & staining
until the end
  hidden glows play, mutate
slowly dying
  do you
see this
  the immensity of the one process
distilling
  the day’s dew
newly done
  every day
different
  the same each morning
era that was
not so much heroic
a long march
few would survive
an embarrassment
the slow slide
the tipping point
reached unobtrusively
nothing heroic
a still point
where the irrecoverable
becomes our bride
the veil lifted
on the delusion we had bought
into
the fracture, the tip
beyond this point
only heroes go
it’s the second go
we’re not happy
that metaphor’s melted
it’s global irony
which clung
and you caused it!
these words
don’t stay long
what were
you thinking of
as if you are
a kind of reverse Houdini
I will stay here
ting! ting!
it’s gone
off without you now
that preposterous shape
a mess of scree
and you want to stay
here again
oh this isn’t vertigo
cue not far to go
cut puns fast — oh
it bucks
and buckles up
a long way down now