

Out of Darkness

I write for those unborn
my children's children's children
they raise their arms in wonder
at my poor words
seeing in them things
I do not see myself

If I could hold them
what richness I would find
in their most wholesome bodies
what promise in their eyes

Children of
my children's children
from out of darkness
I sing a greeting

Make light of nothing
and light a candle
so that our souls
may be united

Hill Fort

I spy them often, crouching
on the terraces, small,
restless men, watchful as thieves.

Their eyes are sharp, missing
only the things that I can see,
roofs on the lower slopes,
the lean white arms
of a windfarm in the distance.

They see
what they have always seen,
a world where every
lesson has been learned
and safety lies
in high, open places.

Valley floors
are best avoided.
Shades of a future
where there's no safety at all.

The Inheritor

It has come to this
A boy in a bed
Trailing tubes
Fighting for life

It has come to this
The midnight trysts
When Arthur ruled
Generations of love
Have come to this
A boy in a bed
With a modified heart
Good for life
If he lasts this night

It has come to this
The skill of men
With surgical truths
At their fingertips
It has come to this
The primitive zeal
Of men who crouched
In fetid caves
And cheated night
With their fiery craft
It has come to this
The march of man.

It has come to this
A boy in a bed.
My son, my son,
Inheritor.

Slate

Slates blow off roofs, are used
by trendy artists in a clever way.
Slate is regarded as a precious thing.
It qualifies for Welsh Arts Council grants.

It wasn't always so. When slate was just
a useful grab for stone-faced profiteers
men hated it as lovers hate the cold.
It took away their breath and left their wives
to quarry consolation from a prayer.

O Jesus wept for quarrymen and boys
too young to die and yet too old to know
the undesigning heather and the wind.

O Jesus wept and he will weep again
to see the tourists stare with curious eyes
at waxen replicas of troglodytes,
and clutch their brochures with heroic pride.