

The Old Place

No one comes
by way of the doughy track
through straggly tea tree bush
and gorse, past the hidden spring
and bitter cress.

Under the chill moon's light
no one cares to look upon
the drunken fence-posts
and the gate white with moss.

No one except the wind
saw the old place
make her final curtsy
to the sky and earth:

*and in no protesting sense
did iron and barbed wire
ease to the rust's invasion
nor twang more tautly
to the wind's slap and scream.*

On the cream-lorry
or morning paper van
no one comes,
for no one will ever leave
the golden city on the fussy train;
and there will be no more waiting
on the hill beside the quiet tree
where the old place falters
because no one comes any more

no one.

Rain

I can hear you making
small holes in the silence
rain

If I were deaf
the pores of my skin
would open to you
and shut

And I should know you
by the lick of you
if I were blind:

the steady drum-roll
sound you make
when the wind drops

the something
special smell of you
when the sun cakes
the ground

But if I should not
hear
smell or feel or see you

you would still
define me
disperse me
wash over me
rain

The Magpies

attempts at old style

When in the
past...

When Tom and Elizabeth took the farm
The bracken made their bed,
And *Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle*
The magpies said.

early

Chorus

Tom's hand was strong to the plough
Elizabeth's lips were red,
And *Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle*
The magpies said.

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Year in year out they worked
While the pines grew overhead,
And *Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle*
The magpies said.

But all the beautiful crops soon went
To the mortgage-man instead,
And *Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle*
The magpies said.

Elizabeth is dead now (it's years ago)
Old Tom went light in the head;
And *Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle*
The magpies said.

The farm's still there. Mortgage corporations
Couldn't give it away.
And *Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle*
The magpies say.

DENIS GLOVER

Holiday Piece

Now let my thoughts be like the Arrow, wherein was gold,
And purposeful like the Kowarau, but not so cold.

Let them sweep higher than the hawk ill-omened,
Higher than peaks perspective-piled beyond Ben Lomond;
Let them be like at evening an Otago sky
Where detonated clouds in calm confusion lie.

Let them be smooth and sweet as all those morning lakes,
Yet active and leaping, like fish the fisherman takes;
And strong as the dark deep-rooted hills, strong
As twilight hours over Lake Wakatipu are long;

*Wanaka
Mackenzie*

And hardy, like the tenacious mountain tussock,
And spacious, like the Mackenzie plain, not narrow;
And numerous, as tourists in Queenstown;
And cheerfully busy, like the gleaner sparrow.

Lastly, that snowfield, visible from Wanaka,
Compound their patience—suns only brighten,
And no rains darken, a whiteness nothing could whiten.

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