

In Memoriam Vernon Watkins

(1906-1967)

I published a poem in America,
in *Shenandoah*, courtesy of Greer
& Dabney. Of which I remember
nothing, neither title nor idea,
but the image of a magpie ladling light
and dark. I stole *Poetry for Supper*
by R.S. Thomas (the higher hunger)
from a Swansea bookshop, black and white
indeed. Thieving magpie on £5 a week
and penny-a-line. You think I joke? I
sent poems to Vernon Watkins who wrote back
that he never described for its own sake.
Truth's metaphysical beyond the eye.
Then he died. What did he mean, for god's sake?