

Biographer

Another one tucked up in bed,
The lights turned off
And a long walk down the tiled corridor,
To the door that goes swish/thwack.

Then a sudden rush of night air.

Fourfuls

1

Were I a speaker of Welsh
I should let the language speak
Through difficult rhymes of englyn,
Forcing its way to the front, like an impatient child.

2

The flattened form of a buck-rabbit
Made slow by old age
Slithers under my gate
Like the last, disappearing page.

3

I have reached middle age.
A gate between two fields:
One crossed in a careless loop and dawdle,
The next one with eyes trained on that well-shaped oak.

4

Cold Northerners, the olive tree completes us.
Its flash of silver-green, its plaited trunk,
Ravaged in Gaza by the 'dozer's teeth:
The poor, as ever, bearing the brunt.

5

The dividends of Empire, overstated somewhat,
Include Britannia's gift to Corfu
Of the small bitter fruit from China,
Its tangy, thick liqueur: the kumquat.