

Peter Sirr

**THE
GRAVITY
WAVE**



Gallery Books

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Contents

The Now Slice	page 11
Home	12
Operatic	13
Blackbird	14
Radio Life	15
Deer, Phoenix Park	16
Robotics	17
Naming the Street	18
Add to Dictionary	19
News from the Old World	20
Eurydice Awake	21
'Say goodbye, Catullus . . . '	24
'Some say . . . '	25
'We move lightly . . . '	27
Blue Octavo: Images from Kafka	29
Signals	31
Ode	33
The Street	35
The Comeback	36
Early Music	41
The Trek	43
Les Neiges	44
Renewing the Contract	46
Walking Home	48
Vision	49
Recovery	50
The Visited	51
Inheritances	52
Funeral	54
The Meadow	55
Through the Gate	56
So Much	57
Winterreise	58
Where Are You Going?	66
Offers	68

At Staigue Fort 69
Reach 70
After Borges
 1 TO A MINOR POET 72
 2 TO THE SON 73
 3 TO A SAXON POET 73
 4 A COMPASS 74
Lost Properties 75
Possession 76
Lived Here 77
Nudge 79
Older 80
Poem in August 82
Kleist's Grave 83
Haus der Wannsee-Konferenz 85
Bruegel: The Wedding in the Barn 86
The Conversation 88
The Gravity Wave 89

Acknowledgements 91

*for Enda and Freya
and in memory of my mother*

Home

Diminished? Really? Gods don't hold us, the temples
wither, the priests are all in sales
but the sun still shines, the oxen low
and the wine-dark sea is still as dark as wine.

Come with me now to where dawn
dips her rosy toes by the harbour wall.
Lust for home is overrated, it's the lust
for time that kills us all. This place was lost

when you first looked back, the only home
is the air you stand in, your creaking bones.
Creak on. Live in the changes, the builders' dust,
the harbour light, this

wary kiss or calypso back to heartbreak
hammock, unaltering day, everlasting night.

Operatic

Everywhere difficulty, everywhere
the resourceful fury of gods and men,
our own monstrous angers. Impossible to come back.
We sit in the dark, oceans between us.

If only we were *there*, beyond the lutes and the cellos,
singing our way home. If we could walk out
to a light like this, magicked to the centre
of what it all comes down to, the sudden

astonishing burst, the twenty-four bars where Neptune relents
and the dead suitors walk on stage bearing candles.
Let him live! The chorus is on fire, *is fire,*

and surely nothing can be difficult now, surely now
we can climb out of the waves at last,
into a hard, enduring music of return.

Blackbird

There was so much to do at the end.
Possessed with what must outlive you
you flailed from corner to corner of a white room,
then slumped over a laptop, mind
on fire, the unstoppable present
flooding your fingertips. How much time
to harvest a self . . . words sprawled across the screen,
words like nails hammered to a sinking board

until the blackbird sang outside
and the world swung open to that one tune.
The blackbird floods the morning, floods the bone.
The blackbird owns the air, blackbird
sings *tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow*
to the fading laptop, the empty room.

Radio Life

This was your radio, all the days you sent me.
Your voice from the woods, the kitchen table.
I slip the cassette into the player
like the curator
of a museum of obsolescence.

We're in there, obsolescing, the tapes frayed.
We might be Hittites. And yet
let the technologies rot. The air holds us
and no one comes to see it, no one
interrogates it. You sit down

somewhere again, in a dark studio.
Silence, the trees signing outside.
A light flares, your voice comes on
as if a great switch has been thrown.

Deer, Phoenix Park

How many are there? I glance like an actor
counting the audience.
Are we the set they're looking at?
We don't seem to have entered yet
or they don't see us. The road
is beyond them. I slow the car.
I don't want to count deer, I want
to count *in* deer. Antler, Forest, Eyes,
Stillness, Speed, Hide . . . I'd like
this currency to fall between us
where we step invisibly from the car
slipped from ourselves to kneel
grass-lit and concentrated, close to a road
that keeps wobbling and clarifying
like the rim of the world or the end of speech.

Robotics

The fake poets come up on the fake news.
Robot lyrics cram the playlists, ice
assembles in the fist. Help love in winter
it is not as in the summer the language
is somehow different, a cold flows through us.
All these lies make an algorithm of the heart.
Wanly it beats. Jack Keats, Jake Eats, Eddie
Rocket's tasteful sonnets. A fake snow
blows from the page. The clouds are real, the larks
have their own channel. Up they go. Autumn, listen,
falls through the earbuds. The studio is bursting
with startup stanzas, this one has reached its target,
it's on its way to a soul near you. Love's
broken, a coaltruck clattering, blackening your street.