

Driving home: thinking of you

Brian Llewellyn-ap-Dafydd

Driving home;
Thinking of you,
A tree grew between my legs:
An enormous oak,
Full of life and bursting with sap.

The leaves were quivering with excitement.
In the branches, birds built nests
And had noisy families.
The trunk was so wide
I couldn't see where I was going.

As I drove along
With the tree sticking awkwardly through the roof,
I wondered if you would
Come
And play in these branches;
Maybe climb slowly up,
Wrapping your slender legs
So tightly round,
That you scraped the inside of your thighs
On the rough bark;
Until you inched your way
All the way up, and out onto a limb
Where you could establish a tree house.

We could nestle together
On a soft couch,
Drinking tea from china cups.
Under the eaves we would place notices,
To ask the birds to sing quietly in the mornings,
As we would be busy as bees
Fulfilling love's sweet and sticky devotions.

On the motorway,
A policeman stopped me,
As I was exceeding the speed limit for heavy goods
vehicles.
When I got to the weigh station the branches of the tree
Got stuck in the weighman's office windows.
I handed the policeman a packet of acorns as payment of
the fine,
And as I drove slowly on, I noticed in the rear view mirror,
A small grove of oaks straining through the windows of
his patrol car.
He must have seen your picture,
which I left as bribe,
Sandwiched in his most official papers.
Now he'll know what it's like to drive down the highway
with a flock of chirruping sparrows
Hopping from branch to twig.



Outside

Brian Llewellyn-ap-Dafydd

A grey day.
Outside a soft drizzle falls.

Within,
Sheltering under a twisted soul,
The writer tortures the page hoping,
Somehow by use of magic,
to avert the final catastrophe.

A thousand times a day
I read the notice printed inside my eyelids,
"She does not love me"
I open my lids wide and try to find evidence to refute this
truth,
Like a man in a petrol refinery glaring,
Without understanding,
At the "no smoking" sign,
As he lights his next cigarette.

Brian Llewellyn-ap-Dafydd: Born and educated mostly in South West Wales. Lived for three years in Paris, from 9 to 11. University in England (Nottingham and Exeter). Keen rugby player and climbing guide. Began working life as a butcher. Became disenchanted with the big money offered by exploration drilling because one was never at home. Main poetic idols (after Shakespeare and Donne) Edward Thomas, R.S. Thomas, and Brian Patten.