

St MARY'S, Middle Tysoe

Wood pigeons gather in the larches
about Church Farm and swallows
contemplate their homeward flight, as soft September
light falls upon Jacobean pews
through watery Victorian glass.

Silence veils the evening
air, clinging to the chancel walls
like the memory of swung incense or the faith
of the dead village ploughmen, raised on a diet of thin grey rains and Lias clay.

Alone beneath the sculpted gaze
of the Norman knight
and hunting dog
God
and
I
sit opposite
one another,
eye to eye
toe to toe:
Job before his maker
- but which is which?

We lay our complaints
before each other. Mine written in
guttering candlelight and the fleet arrow
of a sparrow's short flight,
his written in Levantine dust
and the bitter taste of cheap red wine.

Together we survey the distance
between us and silently
wonder why.