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*Jonathan Davidson*

## IMPROMPTU PERFORMANCE

We stop by the barn's wide doorway,  
which opens, darkly, to the day,  
to hear a poem,  
my friends and I.

Visions of fields and bees and wild boar  
in the woods; the quiet roar  
of a sea of leaves;  
the harvest sky;

the bright red beehives hidden away  
where the trees' green becomes grey;  
the afternoon gloom;  
all pass by

as we listen, by the barn's dark door,  
piling high our 'come winter' store:  
of words, of phrases;  
of barley, rye.

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## BEGINNING AT THE END

*for Lisa Peter*

Beginning at the end, we closed the gate,  
and no one saw us as we walked away;  
the path ran on ahead, it would not wait.

A stream roared quietly across the slate,  
its noisy silence cutting through the day.  
Beginning at the end, we closed the gate.

A dipper said that we had come too late,  
dark light refracting in the water's spray.  
The path ran on ahead, it would not wait.

And new wood turned to ashes in the grate  
of cold, late afternoon, a warm decay.  
Beginning at the end, we closed the gate

and found, in walking, how to replicate  
the heart's uncertain finding of its way.  
The path ran on ahead, it would not wait.

Even the rooks were quiet, to demonstrate  
that sometimes love is what we do not say.  
Beginning at the end, we closed the gate.  
The path ran on ahead, it would not wait.

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## TWO BOYS

Forgot the boy I once adored,  
aged ten. An army family, his,  
so very suddenly,  
gone.

That first *forgetting* did not hurt  
at all. I once, then never, spoke  
of him, so no harm  
done.

I saw him in my head five days  
ago; a wet, cold spring, and yet,  
improbably, the sun  
shone  
on his blond hair, on my tanned limbs  
as we dangled from the swing  
as it swung: dangerous  
fun

for an afternoon. But *afterwards*  
is as empty as the park was when  
we'd gone. Two boys, then,  
none.