

Kevin Graham

**THE  
LOOKOUT  
POST**



Gallery Books

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## Contents

How to Use This Poem	page 11
The Knack	12
Drunk	14
Terrestrial	15
The Lookout Post	16
Science Fiction	17
Encounters	
1 HEDGEHOG	20
2 FROG	20
Poem for Oscar with Stars in It	21
The Lesson	22
Decree	23
Weathering	24
Daddy, Daddy	25
Sketches	26
Homage to Wendell Berry	30
Song	31
Burn	32
Fox	33
Sunlight	34
Pace	35
Sons and Daughters	
1 ANIMALS	36
2 HERE	36
3 HELD	37
4 ON DOLLYMOUNT	38
Steven	39
To a Boy Blowing Bubbles in the Rain	41
Discovery	42
Broken	43
The Bend	44
There, There	45
Locale	47
The Scan	48
Sanderlings	49

Zizou 50  
Completing the Picture 51  
Away 53  
On a Bridge Suicide 54  
Fireworks 55  
Some Waves 56  
Headlong 57  
Gold 58  
Elizabeth Bishop in Ireland 60  
Compile and Run 62  
Locus 63  
Principles of Fatherhood 64  
Vigil 66  
Exeunt 67  
Some Mornings 71  
Traces 72  
The Kid 73  
Natives 74  
Song for Someone 75  
Meanwhile 77  
Perennial 79  
Afterthought 80  
  
*Acknowledgements and Notes* 82

*for Anne*

## *Burn*

The night comes thick and fast,  
injury slow as meaning.  
You didn't know who to trust  
and so turned to the thing

least resembling an answer:  
the river with the light on its back  
like a breathless almanac  
making the air above it shiver

with flies and all that flows  
with time. The bank resembled  
a fault line charged with sighs  
and salt not yet stirred.

Worlds apart, we walked  
beneath the moon like ghosts  
to where a soul stalked  
the soul not there, rousing us

in wonder. Each torqued  
reflection seemed to hold  
forever in a second  
before giving up, turning cold

at the thought  
of never being enough.  
Which is to say we parted  
where the river mouth started

and lay in our separate beds:  
mine a cushion of words,  
yours a stone-filled flourish  
of sandy stars and wash.

## *Fox*

The world stills like this creature  
at the end of the path

with flattened skull, upright ears  
and bushy tail sweeping over sand.

The sea twitches. A blade of fear  
pricks in the time it takes

to look away, its lore close enough  
to touch. Its eyes don't drop

but hold my stare in the house  
of the stare, with its wall of wind

and looping sky. A light of sorrow  
burns in its eyes as if minding

the time cubs surrounded her  
at the bottom of a den.

We gauge each other politely  
from a distance, panting softly.

There's always a thrill that needs  
no danger to make it real.

## *Some Waves*

Descending Portstewart Strand  
the drumming wakes some dormant cell,  
the need to bear the push and pull

of time. A splash of sun makes all  
the difference. Strawberries and wild thyme  
reach across the dunes, vying

like common blues and small heaths  
that glimmer and then are gone.  
Waymarked trails weave their way

through grassy spears, pointing  
to bee orchids and stoned-looking bees.  
The swell in the sternum

is part and parcel of being  
up in this north wind, how it serves  
to whip thought and enshrine

the logic that life is transitory.  
Put your ear to the wind and Mahon  
sings from up in Portrush.

Such quality of light, crowded  
like the sky in a Paul Henry.  
The beach opens like parenthesis,

its single bracket facing a depth  
of field of such gravity  
it's hard not to register a little panic.

Let the wrack at the edge be.  
Let the moon caress your feet  
the way it did when you were small.

## *Headlong*

I can't unwind the drop: he's falling  
in my mind like a helpless birch  
in a squall, slowly crashing  
through the air so my body lurches  
even though I'm never there.

I will gravity away with my hand,  
turn him like a dolphin in water  
and set him gliding through blue light  
away from the danger of the floor.

Or conjure a bed of straw  
from nothing in which to moor  
the broken ship of his body.

Look away now — there's nothing to see  
but a worried man withdraw.