

Evening at Chithurst

evening at Chithurst –
there is nothing in the world
but the blackbird's song

the song notes
stitch me
to earth and to clouds

each white head of cloud
takes in
distinct whistled trills

hands cupping water
in the stream – the blackbird's
voice flows

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air of the shrine room
salted with song – each
meditator breathing

airhead?
who would be anything else
when the blackbird sings

in the silence
between bursts of song
come bursts of heart

eager-eye
whatever you are singing
I agree

Full tide, Chichester Lake

The cold
gleams on still water
for an angler,
smoking a roll-up under the winter trees,
whose line enters
a white cloud. A tender

putters up the channel
to moorings off Dell Quay. One
two, gunshots from the woods
and a hundred Brent geese
grumble into loose wedges
to straggle away

along the lake to where
some daredevil
spirals a small plane
up the late glow
and somersaults in the reddening west.
When quiet creeps back

two thrush-breasted pipits
play where ripples lick the shore
while out on the mirror
a grebe vanishes.
I dare not move
or breathe too much

or the lake will wobble
and I will be filled again by me.

George Marsh is the author of *Teaching Through Poetry* (Hodder and Stoughton), a volume of haiku poetry, *Salting the Air*, and a book of haiku translations called *My Green Wife*.