

Poems

by David Hodges

Swallows

There is a hush before they rise.
I sense it is their final flight,
joyful as they leave,
bound for a brighter place
as the days begin to fade.
They have been preparing long,
the wires now bare
between the lighthouse and the farm.

The coffin bearers pause
before the rush of wings
that fills the eastern sky.
They're up upon their way
as we mourn and pray
to celebrate the mystery
of this passage
to new life.

The Sandpiper

All day
grim and grey.
White of gull and foam
dance against the monochrome.
A sandpiper pecking
even as the sun is setting,
focused on the strand,
its whole world absorbed in sand;
unaware of the ocean,
or the commotion
of gulls in flight
before the fading of the light.

The Caught Moon

Night comes softly
and the caught moon
shivers, trapped
in black branches.

Stars hang shining
like eyes in love,
as the silver wind
disturbs the stillness.

Black wings hover
as I shudder,
out alone, unknown
in the cold darkness.

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Along the Ridge

Between us
no word spoken
in the sunset's afterglow.
Winter stripped
down to zero
in the falling mist
along the ridge.
Stillness broken,
crows cawing,
echoing, re-echoing
in the bare trees.

Jade Sea

Silver sun and white rock,
jade sea stretching
to far blue mountains.
I walk miles of white sand
turning grey as night descends.
My thoughts distracted
by a fisher boat's lantern,
its fiery orange glow,
the slow lick of oar on water.

David Hodges is a monk at the Cistercian Abbey on Caldey Island, off the coast of south Wales. His latest collection is *The Music of the Ocean*.