

Steve Cartwright

Woodbury Salterton

Jack and Ma are in the same bedroom
Here in Woodbury Salterton.
It is our autumn holiday.
A chance to be with Ma
And she with us.
They lie now in the same room
In the same cottage In the same village
By the same seaside
A yard between them
Their lives inextricably linked.
Their bodies and the tide of time
Both bring them together And
Separate them.
On this earth.

Jack
Almost inaudibly breathing the night air
Alight with the heat of youth
Glowing
So young
So incredibly beautiful.

Ma
Not snoring but heavy with her breathing
Lies in her white nightie
Also incredibly beautiful.
Her face, heavy in sleep,
Collapsed into rest.

Sometimes their breathing synchronizes
As if to emphasise their togetherness.
Their oneness.

Others
It syncopates
And a great sadness and panic overwhelm me as I contemplate the loneliness of the individual
And the separation
That is being alive