

RETURN TO GWESHE

Here, my hands smell of love,
My own sweat, the birth slime of my people
And the caves where they're buried;
From under my nails, growing long,
The ground tastes of sweet potatoes;
And my shirt is embroidered with smoke
From fires of sawn-down thorn trees
Who squat, like gossips, in tight branches
And cover the ground with green muscles
And argue all night with the rocks stopping them.

I might not live longer
Than the wagtail halting
To breathe on the tree,
And my life may pass
Faster than a lightning calculation
In arithmetic;
But, it is better to be posted
With the identity card of my people—
Because, too often, when I was over the sea,
I smelled of other's rents,
And left-over beds of love,
And the broody stares of their lamps.

— Colin Style