

from Counting to 100**63**

*What would my neighbours say
if I opened up completely,*

*ended the silence,
told of my past:*

*of fractional relations
formed with others*

*which have no place
in the proper world of integers.*

64

pockets of light
on the wainscoting
of the parlour's east wall

two players cocked across a table
the only sound
a clock nearby

sun in the window
its move down the glass squares
increasing the miniature shadows

black knights closing in
paring the position
dimming the board

65

A predilection for staying put
which others, it muses,
should follow:

remove worn soles,
enjoy the sums of their labours.

Yet in all the bits
of what it perceives,
in every detached corner—

the boots that click by
and are gone.

66

nothing climbs above the horizon
the sky constant
against a dark curve of hills

the stars seem fixed
their coordinates frozen—

something leaden
binds the vault's device:

a beast with a chilling shape
that squats at the zenith
like an unwelcome constellation

and does not move

67

How its thoughts pick through
the room's confusion:
groping of light
through items spread over the floor.

This light turned inward:
the chaos bared
that scatters it back.

Through cracked panes:
trees strewn here and there
on the wind.

The clouds behind in disarray—

in gaps, blue rifts,
the shape, almost, of disorder
edging maybe forward,
or away.

68

waves of pure measure
the sirens descant
from rocks they conceal with curves

strapped to a mast
the poet chants
to drown their strange songs

closes his eyes to obliterate
the shapes of number
made flesh

69

Then there are those
who say the parts face inward
because of embarrassment.

How little they know
of the appetites
which render all else
of no consequence.

70

Peculiar arrangement:

pushed firstly from nowhere
into undivided attention:
others smiling down,
discussing your points,
your inclinations,
your concise lines...

then finally,
to exit into nothing,
nothing at all.

Alan R. Wilson