

Gordon Scapens

## ALMOST ADULTERY

The idea is like a slap  
that wakes up his face  
as temptation alters  
signals to the brain.

Flirting weakness changes  
the name of the game.  
He should know himself  
but has a selective memory.

Now he's an inch away  
from crossing the line  
where fidelity stops  
following the map.

He wears the last episode  
of his foolish grin  
and takes a step back  
from invented persona.

Invisible family ties  
prevent tomorrow's cost,  
where the imperfect  $x$  and  $y$   
in an age-old equation

would equal  
the wrong answer.

## FLAWED IMAGINATION

If you were a call girl  
and I was a customer,  
would you still teach me  
the art of holding  
each moment of life  
like an eloquent offering.

I could arrive lightweight  
carrying only acceptance  
without the burden of a name,  
and I'd paper over the cracks  
in your standard welcome  
to negotiate complete surrender.  
The world could stay  
where I abandoned it.

On leaving you, my money  
would look you in the eye  
and mean every word it said,  
as I carry away the speech  
that I brought with me  
and found inadequate.

Then the worry would set in.  
I would think about next time,  
what we'd be to each other,  
and I might be somebody else.

Stay where you are.  
I'll walk my ghosts away.

## MYSTERY NEVER TOLD

The night is full of distance,  
across a quiet sea  
with a hunger for eternity.

There is a music  
that sounds like silence.

Day's end, unmarred by time,  
displays the sky's treasures.

We are two against the dark,  
against life and fragility,  
and something called fate.

We take this time, enjoy it,  
a token of existence,  
knocking on a prayer's door  
and running away.

Precariously perched, vulnerable,  
any unknown moment  
we could feel destiny push.

The living side of death  
is trying to tell us  
life is only a series of moments  
that lead to a great mystery  
that cannot be told

and it's not the end  
itself that bothers,  
it's the irrelevancy.

## WALKING WITH MORTALITY

Colouring grief,  
feelings in flowers  
tied to the railings  
of a busy marina.  
Seagulls wheel, cry  
their final thoughts  
on embracing loss  
they don't understand.  
Wind whistles hymns  
to a dead stranger  
through halyards  
of restless yachts.  
The tableau estimates  
my own fragile chances  
of wrong place  
and wrong time,  
so I turn from a message  
that knows my name  
in the silent answer  
to an unasked question.  
There's a suggestion here  
I don't want to face.  
Life sometimes takes a step  
that's just not there.  
The atmosphere  
is a catch in the throat  
as I hurry from the threat  
of pregnant clouds.