

4.4 Rolande Passing (1998)

On the third day
the alien but familiar bird
arrived, unwonted
harbinger from another world,
and startled us to sunlight.

Fear me, squawked the bird,
for I'm the flesh and blood,
I hold the resurrection
in the scarlet of my breast;
in the beating of my stippled wing
you hear the proof
of immortality; reflected
in my glittering eye you
dimly see your blindness –
I frighten you, you
cannot comprehend
how I am she,
and she is here again.

Trust me, spoke the bird,
for I'm the knowledge,
that her journey's safely done,
she has again become
the child of Charles, and all
her yesterdays are written
on the cliff of time.
I know her raging heart, and all
that she has striven for:
I am the southern sea,
the cradling wave, the mantled
hillside of her youth –
and I have known her long before.

Love me, said the bird,
for I'm the promise
of communion, and the spirit
of the lunar dance among
the dappled orchards of your home.
And you will surely find her there
when I have flown above
the guardian willows,
and you have lost me
in the northern sky.

Selling - April 1998.