

5.5 Promis (1996)

So carefully reserved –
the final Stella and
her final cigarette
(and even that was broken).
And then she went to face
her waiting demons,
ubiquitous because lodged in her,
the livid demons of her dreams.

O prize apart my bloodless lips
to shout their names,
these maggot-coloured
writhing homuncules, which
thrive like human fungi there
beyond the margins of the mind,
nocturnal fiends – my dearest.
Could I but share with her
the grappling with their slimy skins.
And more unspeakable
the wounds she seems to witness,
hideous the dismemberments,
the blood, the pain – my dearest.
And these are just hob-goblins
of a night or two – they're not
the ceaseless voices in the dark,
compulsive and insidious
assailants of her naked mind –
churning, churning
at the anger and remorse,
the penance of her vacant hours.

O Promis, purge these fiends, and
hush the voices, cleanse those hours,
for her, for me.

Clapham - 1996.