

## 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.