

THE HOUSE LIFE

So many homes, so many stories

And as one light goes out, another goes on.

It's simple really; we own, we live, we move

We are born, we travel, we die.

The house remains, maybe our ghosts do as well?

I lived in that house as a child

I grew up in that house

I left that house when I found my own.

My name is scrawled on the walls under the wallpaper

So are the names of those before me

I have buried a time capsule

And one day someone will find it and know I was here.

I moved to that house when I was a student

There were nine of us sharing

A bathroom, a kitchen, a lounge

The walls can tell a few parties.

I met my partner in that house on the hill

Divided up into flats

Her room in the basement and mine in the loft

The stairs can tell a lie.

I bought that house for my family

Divided genders into rooms

Created spaces from places

The front door bell has rung a thousand times.

I bought that house by the sea
For a place to go for serenity
A nice walk to the harbour
The balcony and wine with ocean view.

I bought that house standing in open fields
The garden but an acre of grass
The rising sun in my bedroom
The setting sun in my lounge in the twilight of my life.

I wrote my memoir in that house
In silence, in isolation
No one came by and no one phoned
And I remembered the time capsule.

I visited my childhood house
But it had gone
The whole terrace had gone
The time capsule still lay buried, but now was a car park!

I visited my student house
It was now a dentist surgery
My space was now a waiting room
No more parties.

I visited the house on the hill

It was now an office

A builder's merchant

Materials stacked in the basement, archives in the loft.

I visited that house of family

A new family with four cars occupies

An extension has been built

For new spaces with places.

I visited that house by the sea

An amusement arcade neon lights the pathway

I can barely walk to the harbour

The terrace has rusted and the wine bottle is empty.

I visited the house standing in open field

The sheep graze close by and take shelter inside by night

As sure as the sun will rise in the east

It will still set in the west.

I have returned to my care home

For they have been worried

It's time to settle in and read

The Archers will be on soon.

My daughter may visit tomorrow

Perhaps my grandchildren can be torn away from their mobile lives?

I have so many homes and so many stories

And a light must go out for another to go on.