

## Shelf Life

A quiet life is what he's had.

Not a single word

Has prised apart those settled smiling lips.

The kitchen shelf:

Clutter of sand-timers, wild thyme, postcards from faraway, long-ago places

A perfect spot, for a silent spy,

From which to peep, and watch

The comings

And the goings

Of generations,

Old and new.

With still, dry eyes

By day, to watch, and weigh

And when the house takes to its bed

(and his oldest friend,

the sleepy staircase sentry,

at the strike of three

startles himself awake)

To sup darkly

Chunter, chuckle, and shake his tricorn'd head

At what folly has played out.

Now

When the house's day has just begun

And touched by the first rays of the risen sun

He sighs,

Takes a long, deep, breath,

Adjusts his seat

And, patient,

Waits

For another day.