

Symphonia

Golden fingers creep the curtain from below

To tinker at the horizon's edge

A quiet interlude

Anticipation

A tuning up.

Then heavenwards shoots and weaves a celestial trellis

A filigree of burnished light that bursts from high

To explode and fill the eastern sky

With vermilion, scarlet, tangerine and rose.

It's daybreak.

Dawning.

And **so**, the yawning world comes alive

To stretch

And shake the mantle of the night

To fling it to the furthest corner of the universe.

To banish it from sight.

At home

There is a stirring

The pad of slippers on the stair

The sound of kettles, spoons, toasters, plates, and dormant wirelesses come-alive

Blackbirds, robins, mewling babes

The rolling out of bins

Morning smells

Of bacon and of toast

Twitch the nostrils,

They raise the spirits, fill the house, and draw the risen to the table

Car doors slam

A jarring syncopation

As quiet streets start to fill

With traffic that crawls, coughs, then catches its breath

In a gasping logjam brought to a slowing, eddying, stop.

The air lies heavy with man-made clouds

The unseen now made visible

Suffused with tastes

That chase away the morning meal.

The noontide sun

A shadow of its former self

Peers down from height

Small, diminished, and almost white

The glories of its golden birth

Snatched

And lost to mobile phones.

Lunchtime sounds:

The shouts and squeals of schoolyard games, of workers' gab, and orders at the bar,

Of radio news, the screech of brakes, motorcycle, bus and car

Then back to work.

Quiet hum of conditioned air, coffee mugs and biscuit tins,

Desktops lost to paper piles

In, out, pending

The chit and chat of office life

Clock hands seem not to turn

But the workday ticks towards its ending.

And so for home

The traffic's reeling in

Reversed

The stop

The start

The door

The key

The glass of wine

Familiar smells, a favourite chair

To sit, eyes closed, to slump
In the cooling evening air.
The jumper's on
As lengthening shadows
Distance from the sun
And branches stretch their reach
Grey flickering flames
They creep the lawn
And silently climb the bricks.
Decision made:
key turns
lock clicks
the swish of curtains drawn.

The evening settles like an old settee
Stuffed
With dishwasher sounds that turn and tumble
A jumble of soaps, rock, arguments, and laughs
A dib, a dab,
Of whispered news
A painter's palette
Of oohs, and ahs, and well-I-nevers
Colour added.
Impressions made.

Now yawning and stretching again return
Watches checked
The duvet beckons
and
one
by
one
the

lights

go

out.

As night-time falls

Slippers climb

And peace descends upon the close.

But beyond the pane

In shadowed alleys concealed

Or bathed in lunar lambent glow

Or in neon starkness caught

The darkness brings

A new dawning.

The bark of fox, the cry of owl,

Alarm and siren

A chained dog's howl

The smash of crockery...

To fill whatever time

Remains of the day.

493 words

The Remains of the Day (Kazuo Ishiguro)

