**Jack and Jill**

Like all sad love stories, its ending was quite tragic,

whether they are killed by magic

or the neglect of society and education,

having passed their early years in a tower,

never out of the limit of the power

of some mad uncle, or some other bad relation.

The comedy of their demise should not detract

from the intensity and commitment of the pact

that force them into this; love does not always

show its most passionate face beneath a moon,

and may as well flourish on a dull afternoon

outside a shop, as in a meadow on summer days.

We are compelled by drama, knowing glamour

is preferable to the acne and the stammer

of the third or fourth choice, though a kind heart and frankness

were sufficient for Jill to give her heart

to one never to have been offered such a part

as Romeo, nor she a Juliet, for all their blankness.

Because of their quiet origins, the ending, when it came,

was more awful than a steep decline from fame.

We are accustomed to think grandeur should sign off

with percussion and taut strings, or make a room a mess,

that greatness should decline with great distress,

but not that dullness have such things to think of.

Thus, the male rolling down the hill’s enough

to stir a crowd to laughter, and watching that garden love

go foul; and as the woman, albeit in her prime, followed,

the exact pathos was like an empty egg, so we cried, almost,

at such innocence at such cost,

and the centre of our world was, if very briefly, lightly

hollowed.