

Extract from *A Scattering*

*Late home one night, I found
she was not yet home herself.
So I got into bed and waited
under my blanket mound,
until I heard her come in
and hurry upstairs.
My back was to the door.
Without turning round,
I greeted her, but my voice
made only a hollow, parched-throated
k-, k-, k- sound,
which I could not convert into words
and which, anyway, lacked
the force to carry.
Nonplussed, but not distraught,
I listened to her undress,
then sidle along the far side
of our bed and lift the covers.
Of course, I'd forgotten she'd died.
Adjusting my arm for the usual
cuddle and caress,
I felt mattress and bedboards
welcome her weight
as she rolled and settled towards me,
but, before I caught her,
it was already too late
and she'd wisped clean away.*