



*Visa  
Wedding*

HARRY GILES



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## *Visa Wedding #1*

Listen, hit's semple:

in Orkney I'm English;  
in England I'm Scottish;  
in Scotland, Orcadian—

this glib-gabbit, mony-littit tongue  
snacks at identity as tho hit wis  
a gollach piecie sappit wi  
the sweet-n-soor o BELONG.

Like aw they ither sangsters I

ballad the islans fae the ceety,  
buzz the ceety fae the islans,  
birn frantic throu hydrocarbons

fer transatlantic jouks whar hame  
is happit in bacon, fried on grits,  
tursit in that muckle myndin n ma'd-on  
ancestry hit's at lang n lenth hausable.

Hey, haud me close, America:

mak me yer kiltie mascot,  
mak me yer islan exotic,  
mak me yer immigrant boy,

mowten me wi soothren sun n muntain  
fir-sap n ser me on ice-cream,  
unnest me, unnest me, shaw me vistas,  
spreid me skinkin ower strath n hill-run.

Leuk, I grewed-up dancin

the Gay Gordons tae Blanket on the Grund,  
Strippit the Willow tae On the Bayou,  
shauchled n spittit ilka wird o Hit the Road

Jack n nivver cam back nae mair, gie me  
laund lots o laund, tak me hame tae the place  
I belong, send me aff feriver but  
I ask ye please, no more nae mair no more.

## *Piercings*

It took two looks to see him—  
snapped head and loose jaw, silent  
moviewise. The boy who broke me in,  
my head, my skin, up, said “a break-  
down would do you good”. The change

snuck him past me, but: same flesh,  
same stride. I called; we spoke.  
The quick, smiling chat of two  
folk who knew inside each other’s  
mouths, but not heads. I looked hard.

The difference wasn’t clear, and then  
it was.—The lipring that turned  
his pout sullen, hot. The jangle  
of earrings I’d buried my face in  
as he steel-tracked my heavy

shoulders. The scaffold. The sharp,  
shocking stud in his busy tongue.  
All gone. In the four years since  
he hauled me into a lift, with  
“You wanna make out?”, he’d pulled

out every metal sign, become  
employable, less obvious. I’d paid  
ten quid in Camden for my first, made  
more holes each time I got depressed.  
Got inked. He asked, “So what do you do now?”

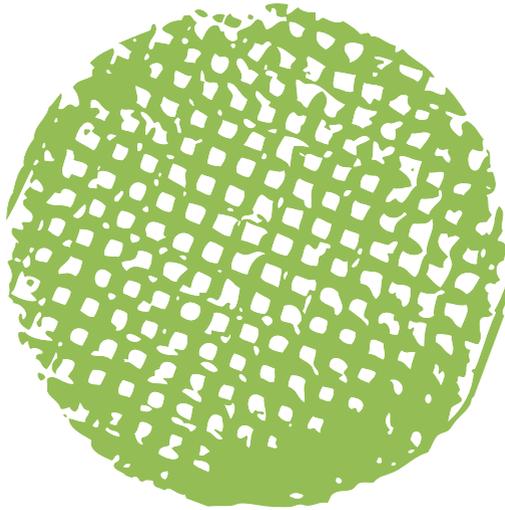
## *Forest*

you're shook in a pulpit / you've buried  
the bloodiest hatchet swung / spent  
an hour in panic behind the files and made  
up with a waltz    wordlessly

there are two hundred glowing faces below /  
you will never uncry your salt / you've bought  
remembrance with it / you carry weight  
on your shoulders like mountains

you bawl Death Is Not The End without  
a moment of shame / you're wholly right though  
you're glittered / though all you sing is *I'm so sad*  
*I'm so sad*

this church could never be empty / you must fall  
asleep on the windowsill or else  
leave your brain behind unwound so the day shows  
sharp like a story



### *Acknowledgements*

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