

Time to Get Here: Selected Poems 1969–2002

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Time to Get Here

SELECTED POEMS 1969–2002

IAN PATTERSON



PUBLISHED BY SALT PUBLISHING
PO Box 937, Great Wilbraham PDO, Cambridge CB1 5JX United Kingdom
PO Box 202, Applecross, Western Australia 6153

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First published 2003

Printed and bound in the United Kingdom by Lightning Source

Typeset in Swift 9.5 / 13

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ISBN 1 876857 92 7 paperback

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For Jenny

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Acknowledgments

This book includes poems written over the last three decades, many of them not previously gathered in book form. For their support and for the first publication of these poems, I would like to record my thanks to the following:

Peter Ackroyd, Anthony Barnett, Fred Buck, Cambridge Conference of Contemporary Poetry, Cambridge Poetry Festival, David Chaloner, Andrew Crozier, Philip Crozier, Nate Dorward, Allen Fisher, Paul Green, John James, John Kinsella, Tim Longville, Tony Lopez, the late Barry MacSweeney, D. S. Marriott, Rod Mengham, Drew Milne, Julia Mishkin, Wendy Mulford, the late Philip O'Connor, the late Douglas Oliver, Tom Raworth, Peter Riley, Peter Robinson, Stephen Rodefer, Aidan Semmens, Iain Sinclair and Picador, Martin Thom, Nick Totton, John Tranter, Nigel Wheale, and others.

Thanks too to Brian Callingham for scanning the cover picture, and to Chris Emery for his exemplary helpfulness and enthusiasm.

Section One 1969-1979

The Elegy for Spring

We have then no mark but
this damp smell which has
enlisted the daffodils the tulips
the wallflowers & the grass
the chestnut trees under
stonework. the guardians of peace
beautiful as a hundred horsemen
dance about the salad/ their red capes.
Have they heard of the Tragedy?
they show no signs of admitting
but "OH! see the arch of the roof
the anger of the butterflies
the knees of the young girls!
dive to them, they are small down there
& your hunger surpasses the sunlight
for merely the look of them . . ."
the sky is scarlet &
palpitates at our feet:
the systole is a deceptively gentle action
and as I burn I suddenly realise
being illusory & transitory it is
As interestingly as it began
the music stops. the meadows
float empty &
Is that what the song of the eagles meant?
that these massive caves with
their brick arches are becoming
too hot: I shall get myself
another place to live, where
it will not be you?

Kara Chach

I

unwithered and gloriously thin-fingered, she is wrapped
completely
encompassing horizon the park the street down to the river,
hoping
what will happen tomorrow. She jumps into the air crinkling
slightly at the edges of choice ('until the day stone cut scissors')
who is after all not heroic, about to be beset with years of it, he
had to eat it. The door opens slowly
and putting down my fork to begin the journey.
Well, Dr. Wolfgang, has the hidden? we are still wondering
the flat river the liberty to watch them at war or otherwise, what
have you to tell us?
How believable this scenery is/ 'The past, the sensations of the
past!
but this is only an excuse for something sandier, nearer to love.
How believable this scenery is/ 'The past, the sensations of the
past!
but this is only an excuse for something sandier, nearer to love.

II

Washing up noises from downstairs light again piles of books all
round the
bed as usual I'm back again and it's Sunday. The problem of
bookshelves
is still unresolved so I resolve to buy some wood tomorrow get
things sorted
out I seem to have been using up an awful lot of distance lately
like
travelling underground or anyway in a different kind of space
though still
quite credible even attractive if you discount the fear the flat
river
elms and sycamores glowing across permitted possibilities I
traverse in
gumboots nightly. I mean Dragons, really, and the water rising
maliciously
over the edge of the sink washing us out into this strange
country with
nothing but lumpy earth and me dying of heartfailure gesturing
delicately in
the hope of two doves; heroism? it's not even useful, I must get
down to some-
thing useful, in fact the only known legacy that has come down
to us there
is a common denominator in these ideas. Noises from
downstairs again it's getting
darker already the screwdriver is too small the knots keep
coming undone the
sauce won't thicken I seem to have been using up an awful lot of
time lately
like travelling and dreaming about death and buses the past the
sensations of
the past, Dr. Wolfgang has turned into an icon, I think I'll go and
talk to Nick.