***The Horizontal Sonnet***

A thousand years ago we lived in Sioux.

The neighbours had a varnish-tree that grew

against the garden wall. I never knew

it touched the earth : I only saw its blue,

long-legged leaves that shivered in the light,

the skinny-taws of septic fruit, the white

milk-spikes of civet flowers and all the bright

and whispering crown that sailed the air. One night

I climbed the wall. The paper moonlight lay

like half-hung pages through the ink x-ray

of branches. Far below my feet, the grey

and scaly-fading pillar dived away.

Now I live alone in Malibu.

Twenty storeys up. I like the view.