

Said The Hawthorns On The Sussex Downs
By Andy Breckenridge

We're a flock of frozen shell-bursts on the hillside

our brainstem trunks and twig synapses cut lines against the cloud

south westerlies bring rain to salt-lash our stiffened hunchbacks

we scrape out time from this scoured
neck of downland trimmed close by sheep
snag tangles of fleece when they pass

you clump by in heavy boots in your wellness
you cycle by on chunky tyres in your wellness
you circle on paragliders in your wellness
you face down the wind for leisure
you empty your eyes in streams
and barely even notice

back home, wind rattles your windows
jeers through the gaps in your skylight

but we static mourners, we late of this parish
we wind sculptures maddened by frantic lark music

we nimbus of hands clutching uphill towards sunrise
our spores ache
our bark creaks
our trunks twist
our sap sleeps

and we stretch all night eastwards
for the light to begin again