

R. G. HAY

ELEGIAC

For I have become a stranger to your country  
where time moves gracious in due ceremony.

Where you live, sunset is a ritual.  
Incense from plants and moist soil  
vespers the settling birds' late burst of song:  
deliberate as Gray's lines night and the dew fall  
and all creatures of the light turn home.

But, where I dwell, dusk  
just means it grows too dark to see my book:  
so I switch on the light and write  
to anaesthetise the lonely ache of night.