

He nodded, then flexed his muscle, up and down, until the butterfly seemed to be taking wing.

She sat on her heels and watched its flight. She loved body tricks. She wanted to do some. Maybe later on she could make her shadow rabbit on the wall. Perhaps she could remember how to do the wolf too.

Her stomach rumbled. She rubbed her belly and was suddenly aware of how flat and empty it was.

"You'll laugh," she said, "but now I'm hungry. Is it OK if I go and fossick in your kitchen?"

"Sure," he said. "But better than that, let me cook you something. I'll bring it in here."

She climbed onto his bed and settled herself in a nest of cushions. She carefully crooked her fingers against the light and wagged the long ears of the rabbit that sprang to life on the wall.

JOHN HANDS

STANBOROUGH LAKES

This is not how I fancied it would be: I had
the usual romantic dreams, house — car — kids, a man
who would know how to turn me on. But now
as you stumble by my side your leg in irons, the
off-side of your face strained in a permanent wince
the dog frisking around our feet I marvel
at my sense of obligation

Nothing else is left.

Parents — friends — family, nothing is what it was
nothing is what it was meant to be. I stand stock-still
your stick in my hand, waiting for the dog to
scramble out of the water. Alone on your seat you stare
at the yacht and its vigorous helmsman.
Beyond the lake a train clatters over the embankment
Whisking other people to unknown, perhaps exciting destinations.