

PAUL S. WOOD

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*Just Like Kansas*

I'm standing in a shallow brook  
with my boots full of water.  
It's not what I came here for, but it'll do.  
The clouds slowly accrete, full of folds and uncertain shadows.  
It's like seeing sometimes further than one would like.  
It's like how I began to describe myself.  
That I used to dream of a road through some trees,  
in a tunnel of branches, in a tunnel of light  
more dreamlike than one would normally expect  
from even a dream. When all I wanted  
was to have a look at your window.  
Behind which, they say, you get on with things.  
When all I wanted was to sit and watch your window reflect  
the gathering clouds. Been thinking about windows,  
about what can and can't be seen when one  
polishes up a piece of glass and peers through it  
at a length of yard. What we know catches up with us  
and we have to carry it with us wherever we go.  
The blueprints for the soul get pilfered  
and stuffed inside a hollow tree.  
It doesn't impede our progress as much as it should.  
The land is full of rocks and trees,  
yet someone once thought to clear a field.  
Someone once thought to build a house and a barn.  
To put up a road sign or two.  
Someone once thought to build a stone tower at the top of a hill,  
though no one remembers why it was put there, or what  
it was supposed to protect us against.