

# Eighteen untold stories of bedrooms, gardens and torn down houses

Christopher Sanderson



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## Social development

Seven shadows of gladness  
Imagination on the cymbal trims  
Mad and bad  
Turn the vibration on  
Listen for the concrete skims

High rise flats  
And low rent houses  
Roundabouts society slims  
Why would you care  
In your turned up sleeves  
On your soft silk blouses

## Just on ready for the taking

Fields of misinterpretation  
Local girls on Friday nights  
In the cell, mute  
Without words for explanation  
A long way  
To where they might

Integrated & dysfunctional  
Gives a purpose for those who care  
The builders of the bridges  
The even handed, with prejudice  
Subsumed, doomed and laid bare

Somewhere else  
The girl and boy both take  
A beating, meeting once or more  
Outside an agreed arrangement  
Only love the curse they shake

Pick me up

Scrape that lousy  
Last potato, OK  
I may have misled you

But hey  
We'd had a drink  
And you looked just on  
Ready, for the taking

## Very late October

A new book bought in Leeds  
On the day that IKEA opened their  
Doors for everyone to leave  
In an orderly fashion due to  
A problem with the technology

A day when clocks went backwards  
And the blue and pink skies of autumn  
Pervaded their wares over the horizon  
To both sides of the six lane motorway

A day when the plumes from the power  
Station cooling towers rose softly for their  
Droplets to cling on to the nothingness  
Of the empty otherwise sky

A day before the expulsions from the  
Sugar beet factory turned sideways at  
Right angles, hit by the onrushing wild  
Winds of the seasonal turning weather

## Triangle

A new book; a place to find place  
Not in the sky but flat footed, level  
Headed, yet with enough of envy and  
Desire to see beauty before me  
Not just looking back over my shoulder

Eighteen untold stories  
Of bedrooms, gardens  
And torn down houses

Nine pairs of partners  
Passing over secrets  
As so life to live again

Your fondest moment  
My closely  
Recollected memory

And the young girl  
From Australia, afraid  
Of the outdoor khazi

Dark to light; stairways  
And rose red curtains  
Spoken unspoken

## By oneself

With a gleam in the eye  
Pass it on  
Please won't you

Why don't you  
Softly, slowly  
Tell me  
My past times story

The stream is overgrown  
The water can be heard but stays unseen  
No children's voices  
Or splashes of swine's in flight

No sunlight or dampness or snow  
Or the late night rites to stamp  
Under the one and only  
Stood up straight, street side lamp

Was there a moment or an hour  
A day as the last memory passed  
One time & forever re-visited

Was there a final shake of the  
Nine o'clock hand-bell  
An ultimate school delivery  
Of break time, lukewarm milk

The meaning is often thrown

By a smile  
Laughter at the airborne joke  
Conversation in a soft armchair

A glass of chilled chardonnay  
Stereophonic music of the spheres  
Behind that the coming of the night  
& the swift return of swine's in flight

## Perception

Be told, here in isolated country  
Under canvas, in the still of night  
There is no one to be afraid of

No fear, outside of your own imagination  
Only the ghosts of the suicidal farmer  
And his oft thought *in bred* son

Not so in the city  
Of a thousand and one creations  
With psychologists, philosophers

Non denominational  
Priests, who walk beside  
The next day latter day nun

I feel safe with people around  
In any case  
What would the thief take from me

My clothes  
My hand baggage  
My loose change

How succinct  
And so obvious  
Life can only steal possessions

But not me, or my dreams  
Or my thoughts of the open road  
The sparrows in the hedgerow

Robins in the Garden  
Or the fedora clad, hip hop busker  
Going up the down escalator, unseen

Being told of the old people  
Unable to talk to the young people  
& the policeman who banned eggs

For health and safety reasons  
Fearful that teenagers might create havoc  
Around the time of Halloween

## A small library

Books on the bookshelves  
Left to right  
Tallest to smallest

Poetry, self help, reference  
Lost & found, well worn  
Pathways to escape

Beatles anthology  
The biggest book  
By quite a way

Krishna's dialogue on  
The soul is minute  
In comparison

& Jonathon Livingston Seagull  
Crashing into cliffs  
Next to Wendy Cope

So  
Well then tomorrow  
Go

And buy that  
DIY  
Contraption

Left to right  
Youngest to  
Oldest

Cold War  
Next  
To Cold Comfort Farm

## **Ether and deference**

Silver sky in my morning  
Ball of fire through the clouds  
You cast long shadows onto paper

The pencils chrome reflects a circle  
Of varying circumference  
& depth of field

The page is not yet  
Penetrated by your light  
Or my words

Your cloud covered stillness  
Is as someone  
Said yesterday of heroin

A sheet  
A bed cover  
A safety or a comfort

Is that so for you  
As now  
You disappear

Drawn down  
Hidden by our looking  
Doubtful as to your own persona

Thought lost in your half possession  
Of a place  
We can neither reach nor touch

## **An unaccountable number of observations**

To read every package  
On a supermarket shelf

Or scribe a discourse on the dialogue  
Of architecture in every western city

Or write even a short poem  
In every place you walk or talk

Bombarded with information  
Adrift with all the books you ever read  
And endless more  
You have not yet discovered

All of this for you to capture  
To cook alongside your banana cake  
And then to you and yours

To decimate  
To collate & re-deliver

Onwards - you know  
To the count  
Of infinity plus one

Distil into that perfect song  
Or the seven syllable line  
Somewhere in the middle

Elude to that most elusive presence  
That you handed me on a plate  
Along with  
Your symbolic representation

For now I'll just say  
Yes it is nice to have met you  
And also to let you know -

Already  
You have made  
Quite a difference

## Word

I thought the modern word  
Sat uncomfortable  
Among the old established form  
Though precisely right  
In the context of the story

But not the word  
Of a painter or a lover or one  
Whose sadness waits uniquely  
Perched upon the shoulder  
Here in this minimalist gallery  
Where all we see is light  
I think of that word  
Postscript - here now  
Sure it holds some beauty

Was it just that – I sort of knew  
I had to say something  
Or was it that the place  
Faintly name the feeling

## Wet and cold, and warm

Frosted crinkled crystals  
Sat upon the five bar gate  
Sentry to the streams and turnpikes  
Blessed as the day we wait

All the while we listen outright  
Touch the frost past of the cinders  
Held together by cross cut wood  
Swung by the blacksmiths hinges

In the stillness, for the moment, later  
The stiff and crumpled grass  
Sparkled sharpness, of the dampness frozen  
Breathed through air of kingdoms passed

Look closely at your clothes, your skin  
All the outside of within, think on, laugh  
That fair scented, hair shampoo  
In the early morning's salted bath

## The pub is closed, except to the farmers

Later, in the library or the bookshop  
Or with Methodist Tea room herd  
Sat in the happiness of the sunlight  
Reading these or someone else's words

Dreams - of pancakes for tea  
With treacle and maple syrup  
Dollops of vanilla ice cream  
And though it's not politically correct  
A king size filter tip cigarette light up

Inhale and exhale your love  
Blow away, rub your thumb and finger  
Wipe the ice from your well worn shoes  
Even without snow, take time to linger

Wander please  
Out into the mist  
Beyond the stream  
On into the clearing, please, I insist

The thinnest sky  
Clear of all  
Except the trails of our own exhaust

No cover for the moon or the stars  
Or for the coldness of cold nights  
No cover for the morning frost  
That will surely follow

The simplest of words  
Clear of all inferences  
Except of their one and only truth:

Love  
Life  
Danger  
Death

The barest of fields  
Clear of all except the turned

## Straight roads

Over turf tops

No cover for the fox

The hare, the weasel

No cover for the shrew, the birds

The scavengers that will surely follow

The simplest of words

Clear to all in appearance

In sound too

If not too transparent in the meaning

The morning came as we knew it would

Cover for the grass

Cover for the leaves

Cover for the rooftops and the stubble

Yet all at the mercy of the full on sun

That is sure to follow

The flat spot

At the tip top

Of the up and down

Arable and

Farm land acres

Hedgerows drop

Onto fences

Trees without leaves

Follow shadows &

The line of plough

Sunsets, bigger

Than cathedrals

Moons decked

With all of Saturn's

Rings, it seems

As if all to mean

I have seen into

A deeper autumn

With the clean air

Of coldness bound

## At least two sides

Half in lightness half in dark  
Half way home past Lincoln Park  
Half in Sodium half in sky  
Halfway there I wonder why

Half in praise half in pain  
Halfway past I can't explain  
Half in darkness half in light  
Halfway wonder what I might

Half in sleep half in wake  
Halfway from the dreams I make  
Half in stillness half in flight  
Halfway way up then out of sight

Half in bud half in leaf  
Halfway acorn underneath  
Half in mist half in dew  
Halfway home the migrants flew

Half in sun half in shade  
Halfway done the moneys made  
Half in anger half in doubt  
Halfway round the roundabout

Half in clover half in rye  
Halfway over do I cry  
Half in Dover half in France  
Halfway over the last romance

Half in life half in death  
Halfway gasp for my last breath  
Half in mourning half in joy  
Halfway dressed in corduroy

Half in many half in few  
Halfway sent the soldiers knew  
Half in danger half in doubt  
Halfway arms they held them out

## Looking up

Half in stillness half in style  
Halfway art on murder mile  
Half in brother half in son  
Halfway death for everyone

Half in justice half in retribution  
Halfway rumours courts contribution  
Half in peace half in reconciliation  
Halfway long walk past alienation

With a splash of water from Dmitri's hand  
The last curled up double leap ended rigid  
The audience, even after the last curtain call  
Could do nowt else, but ask for more

You tell me that sentimentality carries a cloud  
Not to cast my memories on to others  
Those who have their own issues to carry  
With past lives to address and to undress

I am leaving you now, for a while at least  
To forage in my own landscapes  
In my skyline beauty  
Not in past streams & becks  
But in the new rivers  
That run down mountain sides  
I have not yet visited

Oddly I do this whilst Satie  
Plays his Gymnopédie

## The other side

I cannot help but picture  
The pumice stone you spoke of  
Did you expect this  
Did you predict this

The tap drips  
Of which you know nothing  
Dust inside your casket  
Unable to see the ripple

Or hear the resonant cadence  
Yet here you sit, sat  
Still beside me, on this frivolous  
November morning

We'll talk of lies, we'll talk of truth  
We'll walk all over our unheard youth  
We'll talk of liberty, we'll talk of honour  
We'll walk all over the fallen Madonna

We'll talk of society, we'll talk of class  
We'll walk all over the wayward lass  
We'll talk of poverty, we'll talk of creed  
We'll walk all over if you don't read

We'll talk of courage, we'll talk of pride  
We'll walk all over should you deride  
We'll talk of culture, we'll talk of history  
We'll walk all over now where's the mystery

We'll talk of strength, we'll talk of power  
We'll walk all over cometh the hour

## Eyes closed

Shadows on the paper  
Finest of fine sun scrambled hair  
Echoed vision  
Snowflakes on the screen beware

Shadows on the portrait  
Finest touch of sheen ever seen  
Echoed sound  
Ragamuffin's ragout the dream

Nowhere else to go  
No movement ahead or behind  
Nevertheless in our mind  
Travel is untroubled don't you find

Nowhere to settle  
No stillness, no rest  
No firmament  
Even in the fiction

Nevertheless all of this  
Without a sign  
Of outward  
Contradiction

Nowhere for expression  
No outlet  
No paste  
No demonstration in haste

Nevertheless we could  
Do it if we wanted  
Could we  
Couldn't we

Nowhere else to go  
No movement above or below  
Nevertheless we are here  
And always & forever ...or so

## Stood waiting for the kettle to boil

Just then  
In that absolute moment  
I was there again  
It moved over me  
And across me  
Caught me, completely  
The sea  
The island  
The beach  
The airport runway  
O boy  
Wouldn't it be great  
To turn them  
On and off  
To take control

Just the  
Waking moments  
To begin with  
You can keep  
The dreams for now  
But hey  
They too are on the agenda  
Before the dead  
Or the dying  
Or the horrors  
That we can't  
Quite imagine  
Yes, let's get back  
To our own stuff  
Settle for our own immersions

## Looking forwards

There are shadows  
But they are nothing  
Other than the preservation  
The hiding of your face  
From the tearaway sun

There are ornaments and pictures  
But they are nothing  
Other than a receptacle  
For outpouring eyes  
Behind dark glasses

There are clocks  
But time is nothing  
There, now it is gone  
And here it comes again  
Without any life in the stasis

There are widescreen televisions  
But they are nothing  
Without the engineer's electricity  
The creativity of the artist  
And the vacuum of the audience

