**Curled in the footprint of an ancient oak**

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**Submerged beneath waves of tsunami fields,**

**The soil turned auburn; the wheat faded ochre.**

**At a distance, the Wrekin and Clee hills**

**Break curves over a flatline horizon**

**Disorientating its deadset path**

**On this clear, unfussy October day.**

**Nearby, within earshot, a cold bloodbath**

**Holds sway in Shipley copse; the hunter’s gun**

**Reports its easy kills with “crack”! Such fun.**

**Afterwards, sparrows may resume their play.**

**Hidden in the tree’s shade, I sit and watch**

**A brace of buzzards brooding overhead**

**Circling, calling to each other with “screech”.**

**A faithful spaniel, disinterested,**

**Lies contentedly by my side and waits.**

**Beyond our reach pale, nameless clouds evolve**

**Senselessly mirroring nature’s cruel rite**

**And, like incense, gradually dissolve**

**Confirming mystery, leaving no trace**

**As in a poem by W. B. Yeats**

**Where the wild swans desert him and take flight.**

**Bells peal; a church steeple points to Heaven**

**And Time, like a phantom, glides in silence**

**Through yet unborn bluebell woods on Nurton**

**Hill with blind faith in the sacred progress**

**Of invisible potential, royally**

**Assenting to Life’s inexorable**

**Rout. How can we as living beings transcend**

**Unwieldy Death’s inevitable**

**Consummation? Maybe our true bounty**

**Is Contentment, at one with Earth’s beauty,**

**Learning to love and be loved till the end?**