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At This Time (for Clare), To Emily Kate On Her Birth 11 August 1994 (for the original Emily, Marina, Greg, Rebecca)

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Abstract

AT THIS TIME (for Clare), TO EMILY KATE ON HER BIRTH 11 August 1994 (for the original Emily, Marina, Greg, Rebecca)

Syd Harrex

AT THIS TIME
(for Clare)

Out of magpie throats, white water music
somersaults over Adam's dark apples,
bosom slopes affording salmon shadows
as banks do bream, as blackened skies hide trout.
All the lusting and listing on the land,
as its winds rip bible tissue pages,
are incomprehensible without hands –
on seeding and reaping, fringeing vineyards.
Retirement here is spiritual recess,
comings and goings of eggs, cheese and beer;
you always collect anxiety mail
from the post-mistress, never telegrams
from T.S. Eliot on behalf of God.
And that's the fluke truth: beautifully odd.

TO EMILY KATE ON HER BIRTH
11 August 1994
(for the original Emily, Marina, Greg, Rebecca)

I bet you are robust, and shout a bit
even now. Mar your mother's sleep at times
by all means, but don't neglect the aftermath
of smiles, finger clinging, the tenacious
suction of each nipple – unspiteful of
course, finding there all imperatives of love.
But there's a father in your envelope
as well. Feed him enough umbilical rope
and in years to come all you need to do
is wind him back like a big clumsy fish.
Watch the weathers inside the house and learn
the outer seasonal arrays. Silence
without meekness; trust with honour; belief
in yourself: these surpass the must-be grief.