

Pippa Little

My Gathering

Surrounded by slanting walls rose-red
and tappy-lappy casements
this churchyard sits in its own secrets
known only by locals
and lonely tortoiseshells:

slip through its froned gates
and city roar turns to murmuration
a sea weathering of stone
names I know well
warm to my hands' touch

Grace who died a girl
Grandmother Laura Marley, delivered
into the Lord's care 1869,
a whole family of MacMillans
Resting in Peace Perfect Peace:
when time and the heart make heavy

I go with nothing more than need
to be among fern, bramble, dog rose
where they listen to my thoughts,
the old sun shawls our shoulders
and we are companionable with one another.