The room was square and white. It was filled with light. Had large windows on two, maybe three sides. Yes, white and light. Must have had two beds, some chairs. The floor - polished planks, maybe. Yes - must have been polished planks with a worn and faded small carpet here or there. And me eight years old, could be nine.

Each morning, hanging out the window. The fields all around the house and a dusty road leading into the village. Where then? Along into the village, small square, for café au lait and fresh bread. Bare knee post-war ration business. What was that? Lean out the window and, a strong sunlight on the fields. Lines of dark green leaves - beans? In the distance - the village, raggedy summer trees, and glimpses of the sea? Wake up and then - can't remember. My "uncle" there, the window open, the sun and fields.

(In the morning - over there - now - your long dark hair frizzy with sweat in a humid New York apartment, or wavy with sea salt on a California beach, fresh wind and remote. You step in, now step back out.)

We stepped out. Must have. Down to the village, for food at least. Lunch or dinner. A piece of toast coated with thick pink stuff - mussels, they said, it's good. I don't remember any other food, but there must have been. Mussels, milky coffee in bowls, and large bright lollies sold by an old woman as you walked down the cut to the beach. A beach of fine white sand, and small shells never seen before. Pockets full of shells, "uncle" and me. Exploring each cove, walking, the surf.

Small secret coves. The large light room. No cars anywhere, only the distant cries of people going somewhere or doing something.

The family makes an expedition. It goes out of the village along the footpath to the next village. The path follows the coast. Is on short spring turf. Reaches an estuary. As the river curves, there are "the echoing rocks" I'm told. Lumpish black boulders set in a shallow wide river with a high bank behind. Small echo as small boys yell. No pause - keep on with the expedition. Reach a ruined ivy covered castle. Was that the point of it all? Blank sequel. Must have been a return on foot or bus. Home to that room. To that village and its restaurant. Stuck there - no - but that room. Away from the family home.

(And now. Know you. But then, the seashells in my pocket and fine sand underfoot. Sunlight and the room wide as ever, windows to dream from. "I've got dreams, dreams to remember," sings Otis, "listen honey, I still want you to stay, I still love you anyway."

Where does that leave you me? Most beautiful one. Weeping or bopping. Hey honey. Break the aspic.


Diaphanous your garments as you dance on the sea's edge.

Lee Harwood
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Brighton