

The High Rock and Wood Mountain

Children watch the high rock and wood mountain
suspended in the window.
Each unknown to the others
will take on imaginary paths up the near side.
The sun rises from behind.
Though the parents know its Scotsman's name
it's never thought to ask.
There are three colors;
they blend late, form grays, form black,
come quickly into the sky.
Night on the mountain:
The birds' calls go no farther than next trees.
The pressure of the night pushes all back.
All is within check, fires burn
with no light, their heat won't boil water
or warm beans, the birds' cries are sharp
But cannot penetrate.
The mountain is all rock and wood.
Stepping is narrow.
Paths are told strictly, no deviation.
Ways are tight, they spiral.
They are paths and nothing else; rocks, even large rocks
slip free under a boot.
But there is no danger.
There is never danger.
The children are carried,
each is carried alone,
within no one's sight, within no earshot.