

## High and Low

The run off from leaves pattered on the roof of the car. Between the summer deluges we decided to chance our arm at ascending the moor. Our conversations are quick-fire, interspersed with which routes to take. We talk more since the pandemic but equally talk less, such is the comfort we have in each other's company. In those moments of silence the far off barking of a dog, distant rumble of a car on a country lane or calls of sheep and cattle can be heard. We walk on, the ground soft from rainfall squelching underfoot. Larks break cover from the heather, dancing and chirruping above.

The sky clears as we reach the summit. The Lancashire landscape a contrast of lights and darks as the sun casts against the retreating rainclouds and dazzles in the thousands of windows below. We point out landmarks, joining the dots of the places we've been before. A motorway snakes through the landscape, an ant-line of cars marching upon it.

No one is here but us. We prefer it that way. The wind howls, rattling at the scaffolding that enshrouds Darwen Tower making it sound almost mechanical.

"Spooky," She says and we start our descent, passing the tranquility of a reservoir's rippling waters, before plunging deep into the thick wooded valley under the shadow of the moors. We keep within earshot of the brook that guides us back whilst speculating about the lives immortalised on bench plaques. The path comes full circle. Homeward bound.