



# Silent Highway

*Anthony Howell*

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**Silent Highway** Anthony Howell

"An eclectic original."—Peter Reading in the Times Literary Supplement

"For many years, Anthony Howell has been unspooling his mad and lovely poems in England, yet has somehow managed to be not famous. . . . Meanwhile, welcome to the wide, wild world of Britain's best kept secret."—John Ashbery

*All the sweat of working be to set things up back home,  
But it's more than fifty year, and me still on the roam.*

*Man, it's just the women here who make we feel alive:  
Had I share of them since the day me arrive.*

*Ain't they lain beside we, the smooth night long?  
Sweet Thames, run softly, till me end I song.*

The centerpiece of *Silent Highway* celebrates the role of the river Thames in the life of London. It is written as a sequence that looks at history and the present: from Pocahontas's voyage to the arrival of the Windrush bringing immigrants from Jamaica, the mysterious death of Roberto Calvi and the Marchioness disaster, via the Fire of London and many incidents in which the river has been spectator or participant. Anthony Howell's mix of verse styles and skill with cameos ensures that interest never flags.

In other poems he demonstrates his pleasure in avoiding the predictable and in writing on a wide variety of subjects. Among the many poems of place, in which he excels, are some disturbing descriptions of modern Britain; in the final section, poems inspired by a winter spent in Brazil, he has surprises in store.

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