

At Ron and Joan's on a bursting spring day,  
They have a few muddy fields, some fresh lambs,  
a handful of chickens, less than a gaggle of geese.  
Here's one of the hens, stepping by the kitchen.  
The warm corn-puff fluff of her, through the open door,  
head-jerk, strutting in. This is something she does.  
My mum thinks it's brilliant, unbelievable:  
just imagine that, a hen coming in  
like a person, treading a cold-toe floor.  
I wonder why this has tickled her.  
It's not so strange, after all, a hen in a house,  
just another animal on the earth.  
The hen cluck-clucks. Then it clicks: I forget  
it's as if she's seeing this for the first time,  
like a child, when she read me the word, the world,  
forget it's less where it is than the thing itself,  
the sense that everything is miracle.  
I forget that wherever she goes now,  
even if the impression could settle,  
dementia is already there, at night,  
a fox crept in to the roosts of the head,  
ready to tear the memory apart.

Iain Twiddy