

'The townsman envies the villager his certainties...'

Ronald Blythe,

Now show me where soft sunbeams glow,
Eight minutes old, eight minutes warm,
On bumbles safe in foxgloves' bells,
Through pippin leaves, to goose-grazed lawn,
Where alliums and knapweed dance
Triumphant on a summer's morn.

Now show me where soft blossom soothes
Its pippin branches with its smile;
Soft as a dandelion wish
The knotty timber basks awhile.
Here bold, exotic bluebells ring
For goslings, soft and single-file.

Now show me where soft apples lie,
Where fiery leaves and dahlia sprays
And soft-plump brambles celebrate
The life-in-death of bonfire days.
Rain soft as fox-fur cannot dowse
This life-affirming bonfire blaze.

Now show me where the ice-soft rill
Sleeps, calm without its burbling flow.
Redbreasts, red berries, silver frost
Bedeck the shrubs; the sun shrinks low,
But softening the wintry boughs
Are sprigs of hopeful mistletoe.