

Home-coming

I am reaching for an answer. I am reaching for a word for something that I know I know but can't recall. I am reaching for someone's name. I am reaching for teabags on the top shelf in the kitchen cupboard. I am reaching for the last packet of fruit pastilles in Asda's sweet aisle. I am reaching for an apple on the back branch of a tree. I am reaching for that copy of that book in the Foyles window display. And it is there and I am close and I am close. I touch the edge of the book and the corner of the box and the curve of the fruit. I touch the first letter of the name and the vowel of the word and the rough bark. I reach for a hand in your hair and I touch the curve of your scalp and I reach and I touch and I am close. And for the first time in months, I am home.

The Haunting

You are The Haunting at Drayton Manor. I enter, knowing there is something sinister beyond the chained door. In the first instance there is wonder: the room is treetop tall and Dickensian decorated with bulked bookcases that are climbable in my awe. It is darker here than I normally prefer anywhere to be but the immediate view is car in headlights clear and that feels enough. In the second instance there is something like terror something like trepidation something god-like in intervention: a cautionary overhead speaker tells me I should not be here and I perceive this to be our omniscient narrator. Candle lightbulbs dim and flicker like senses touched by the soft blow of a lover and I am too far into the space to reach for the walls; not yet far enough in to have been a security rail. Not being in a relationship with you is the moment before the floorboards start to shake.