**Tongues in Trees Project:**

**Transcript of Lucy reading The Sun Stood Still**

Summer solstice, now a tender kiss away

Sun didn’t move ‘cross the sky that day

And the earth

All pregnant and

heavy with her lush green riches

and plump with dripping sweetness

She slumbered

All lazy and hot

Her sweet, ripe fruit

Not for you this season,

Now in your seventh age

Sans taste

The day I knew you were going to die

The sun stood still within the sky

A bullet shot

punctured the blue

And ripped at the edges of our time

Mortality-soot smudged our cheeks

I kicked at the dust

and the empty shell at my feet

A dutiful daughter etching

kind and thankful ink

*You were such a strong force in my life*

My hand knew this was to be the last father’s day card

I would ever write to you

My hand knew

The day before my eyes knew

My heart unravelled

as the red thread of your life had been spun and measured

and now was about to be cut

Father’s day

Just after lunch

‘My writing’s a bit messy’

A lie to save you

It was as close to 1912 copperplate as my writing ever gets

‘Shall I read it to you, sans eyes?’

Carefully, I took it from your hands

Opened it

Sand slipping through my fingers

Words staring back at me

All curling around spikes of past tense

and pricking my eyes

I thanked you for always being there for me

Always

Never judging

A declaration

Not just a little thank you scribble

Like previous years

Perhaps

No

A bowing of the head

honouring of 23 and a half years

silently howling

type of a thank you

My lips conjured more words

Enticed them from my solar plexus

Sugared them up through my heart

Gave shape to the unspoken

entwined with the heady red roses

And there they lay to rest upon the sap thorns

Between which I would soon see your soul depart

Your half-lit voice rasping response

Sans teeth

‘All I have ever done is this,’

You raised your striped pyjamed arms from your sides

Into alleluia pose

Lifted from your metal, hospital bed

They had grown in skeletal length

And took an eternity to steadily elevate

An iron bridge opening

The arms of an engineer

A gluer and fixer

A loving father

‘All I’ve ever done is this and

and as long as I have breath in my body,

I will continue to do so…

My darling, dependable one.’

Arms always open

Oh! The gift of that deathbed adjective

Just before the last breath is taken

I now have the word ‘dependable’

burnished in my heart

Look closely

next time we meet

For you might see it

Momentarily, Catch the light

and illuminate our way

The day I knew he was going to die

The sun (it) stood still within the sky.