

Anne Stevenson

Waving Goodbye

To my son leaving wild Wales on a windy day

Shadows sweep over the hills at a furious gallop;
Cloud-horses form and reform, group and regroup—
Impermanence brushing inscrutable purples and greens
On a canvas of mourning you'll barely claim;
Nor will you remember it, travelling away,
Away from where we stand in the sunlight waving,
While you wave, too, from the car's bucking window.

So you went, and every thought, vowel and verb
Of what you are went with you;
Every syllable and page of what you will do
Or may say, all your everydays of solitude or multitude,
All the vague, massed cumuli of your intent
Went with you, out of an us, out of an ours,
As the gate clanged shut into a new story. Yours. All yours.

Anne Stevenson's fourteen collections of poetry have appeared chiefly in England, where her *Poems 1955–2005* were published last year by Bloodaxe Books in Newcastle. She moved to Britain after winning a Major Hopwood Award from the University of Michigan in 1954 and has since held teaching fellowships in London, Dundee, Edinburgh and at Oxford and Newcastle Universities. The recipient of three honorary doctorates, she received the £60,000 Northern Rock Writers Award in 2002. She is married with three children and four grandchildren, and lives in Durham (U.K.) and in North Wales.