

The bee and the machair

Snug in the lee of the lowest dunes
and pink thrift-cushioned saltmarsh,
a fragile garden tends itself;
its scrawny soil and shell-sand
blown inland by westerlies.

Aroused by the corncrake's scratchy rasp
in the reeds of the nearby croft,
the rare Great Yellow Bumblebee
seeks the perfect nectar.

The pyramidal orchid's spike,
rose-purple petals hooded,
believes a foxy odour.

Heath-spotted, paler pink,
proud of its keel-shaped leaves
and softer aroma.

Tufted vetch, tendrils curling
taunts the flaxen kidney vetch
whose near-twin birdsfoot trefoil,
leaning low, beckons, bold.

Lousewort yields, hogweed bobs,
ox-eye daisies tender, wink.

All succumb to the roving bee.

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