The spirit of man is the lamp of the LORD, searching all his innermost parts.

Proverbs 20:27

A Personal Reflection
By Geoffrey Butler

Cromer WWII Observation Post - Looking Out – Looking in

Red wine glows in the light
Of the wrap-around glass slits of the WWII observation post (now accommodation for Cambridge graphic designers on holiday).
Overlooks the broad North Sea,
Supple, sensuous, rippling like skin.

Grey and purple mist covering the endless, shining, summer evening
Conspires with silence and Queen Anne’s Lace to seduce me into spirit space.

Blackberries and horsetails, rampant seashore shrubs,
Fields of grass and wildflowers
Are the close view
Punctuated by the occasional walker
Emerging from the wild field grasses on the cliff-top path.

But the North Sea merging with the sky is eternal,
Merging with existence itself.
This is the incarnation.
This, then this, then nothing – All is.

One tall Queen Anne’s lace stands out,
Emergent above the sky line –
One floret gone to seed.
The bees bothering the living flowers
Insist on their participation in fertility too
And all will be, in two weeks, seed heads
And like glorious voluptuous women
Will wrinkle and age
But without regret.
They know they have produced an array of new forms
Hitherto not seen
And have conspired with the creator In originality.

And Campbell calmly negotiates little Penny to bed downstairs,
Hearing her stories,
Telling her stories.
Bringing her to Grandpa, once, twice, to say, “Goodnight, I love you”.
Grandpa sings.

A great ship appears out of the mist.
Campbell sings, “Yes, Jesus loves me”.
Penny interjects with conversation
To avoid drifting off into the world of sleep.
Daddy goes on singing.
The ship moves on to the centre of the horizon,
A wall of mist behind – a veil of mist before.

And the pigeons and magpies swoop through,
Like Penny insisting on consciousness,
Whining against the fading of the light,
The certainty of sleep.
Struggling against reality, Penny cries out:
“I need to go and see Grandpa”.
“Daddy! Daddy! I need to go and see Grandpa”.
Campbell leaves her to visit the view and drink his wine
But then returns to the resistant sleeper.

The ship has gone now…All is mist.

Daddy is strong.
He will stay (like Jesus) close beside her all the way
Till reluctantly but blessedly
She enters the land of the unconscious.

So let this be for all of us.
Give us companions
As the evening moves on, the light gradually fades
And we are released,
Merging into the eternal horizon.

And wake us in the morning