

GROUNDS FOR PLEASURE

From where the vanished mansion stood
the afternoon disputes with the river,
Dour it is not:
families at picnics watch children dip nets in the green lake,
two weathered seadogs carry sleek model yachts,
the envy of a staring boy,
a mongrel roots for secrets in the undergrowth;
from the walls of the nursing home a short procession emerges,
intent on the bridge's slope,
a woman in a wheelchair clutches memories to her breast
in the shape of a doll.
At the tearooms, all that's left of the old house,
knives on crockery echo the clack of ivory on ivory.
In its harshness time takes so much,
in its kindness preserves such pleasures.

Trevor Breedon