

Back to the Things Themselves:

Text One: *Galium*

It's been a cold, dampish, day. Drips hang from bare branches and hedges.

I've noticed these fragile constructions before, aglow in the early light as I pass. They are harder to spot when I go back at a different time of day to look for them, and they're not marked on any map.

Though the day is fading now, they are just visible by their faint gleam; a tumult in dormancy, evidence of earlier verdure. A delicate tracery of a structure, like the bones of something left behind, which of course it is; but strident even so.

There is symmetry however, in the confusion, a certain angularity; tousled curves and twists turn out, on closer scrutiny, to be formed from lengths of material that is almost linear.

From nodes spaced along these lengths, shorter, thinner, straight pairs of opposing 'arms' branch outward, coat hangar-like. The arms branch again, this time in three, and again, ever shorter, ever thinner. These spindly lines are contrasted by the solid, fuzzy orbs that are fixed singly or in pairs at their terminal points.

It's as if, were it not to cleave and bind to itself and other things and one were able to pick each array up in its entirety, it would form a sort of perfectly balanced, hanging sculpture or the orrery of some complex universe. But this flowing, binding perfection speaks only from this particular place and time, inseparable from the whole.

As the light fades, they seem to recede, become wraith, underexposed versions of themselves.

Morning Broadcast:

Text Two: *Symphoricarpos*

The murky gloom of early morning is seeping away but it'll be some time yet before daylight. The air is laced with birdsong, the odd raindrop.

On the near horizon, chest-high, a floating mass appears in my field of vision; a host of pale dots glowing from out of the gloom, like a controlled, almost static explosion. *Almost* static because when I look directly at them, they appear to swim a little before my eyes. They are stilled somewhat by looking to their side. It seems to be an effect of the light or perhaps its lack.

As I reach the edge, I find that the apparition does not after all, levitate, but sits atop a riot of bare, wiry stalks. Such is their density in fact, that it seems that, were I to stretch myself out, right across the top of the arrangement, I would be supported, buoyant.

And yet these stalks are not solid, rather their strength is conferred by an apparent flexibility and implied springiness.

Many of the dots, that I can now clearly identify as spheres, are clumped together, facing out at different levels and in opposite directions. Some are in twos or threes. They form a sort of visual rhythm. Most are pale, creamy and perfect, a few orange or brown and deflated. Some sit singly on the ends of stalks, like punctuation, exposed but inexplicably resilient.

In the fullness of day the spheres are brightened, whiter. I see their after-image drifting behind my eyelids for some time afterwards.