



Hotel Gordon

An Irishman with holes in his boots,
fresh from the soup kitchen and Victoria station,
a South African, sleeping in night buses,

visitors, not even speaking the language
of the country, let alone the sense of sanity,
women with histories of sad adoptions,

a man from Eton, addicted to drink and crack,
a black man, knifed, and abused as a child,
yet gentle as the father he became at sixteen,

an Italian who lost her mother aged four:
all these I mean, people lost in the in between
of life, as some make good and others fall back.

Sarah Wardle (b. 1969)

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o life, as a when win throu and ithers faa back.

*translated into Scots
by Andrew Philip*

from "A Knowable World" publ. by Bloodaxe Books 2009. "Hotel Gordon" refers to an NHS psychiatric unit in South London, called the Gordon Hospital. Sarah Wardle has been a patient there. Reprinted by permission.

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