

Some call it poetry

Why write verse (or, as some call it, poetry)?
It's simpler than you think.

When I was very young,
then not so very young
then less very young than that
I talked a lot and would not, could not shut up
and silence from my corner of the room
was always valued and encouraged,
so rare it was.

'All right now that's enough'
was a constant refrain
'now pipe down, please, just a little'
was another. But I did, could and would not listen.

My father complained more than once
'you're for ever on transmit, my lad'
and made it very clear
it was not the preferred mode he wanted me to adopt.

But we are young just once,
just the once, then just the twice,
then just the thrice,
until, perhaps, two heart attacks, a little grief,
(some, though not all, of it romantic)
two parent deaths
(and the Lord knows what else)
drop the penny finally, and we wise up.

Wise up? You say 'wise up'?
Was that 'wise up' as in 'wise up'?

I did and do, but thereby I mean not

the ancient socratic or reputed
far eastern kind of wisdom
of sitting still and staring into vacant space,
but just the simple kind,
the fact of not being quite as stupid
(or aloud) as once we were.

It happens, it does, you know.
It happens quite often, apparently
and it has happened to me.

I am not wise (no leave wisdom to the fools),
but I am perhaps not quite as stupid as once I was
and I now appreciate
that as Bucolic of Wessex once observed
'Less is more, dear boy, and more is less'.

Ah, so wise, so wise!
(Or, better, not quite as bloody stupid).

But old ways dies hard and never die young,
and the yapping of which my father
more than once complained
when I was six and he was himself still young
has not been abandoned, no just modified.

So still I yap, but no longer out aloud.
Now I yap on paper (so to speak)
and I write my verse
(or, as some call it, poetry).