

One of these days I'll do like David Hockney

21 lines

and move into a timbered farmhouse in rural Normandy
where I'll live with a much younger man called Jean-Pierre
who is not my lover but my technician, archivist, assistant.

I'll wear thickest rims of tortoiseshell and a flat cap over
my blond mop, tell politicians they're dreary and smoke
like a chimney. I might even try on the Bradford accent.

Likely, I'll turn my back on young men taking showers
without pulling the curtain, sprawling naked in socks
on a day bed in Earl's Court. I shall fall in love with pixels.

I won't be fussed about swimming pools in Saint-Tropez,
busy myself brushing the heat haze far-off in the distance.
I'll walk with a stick, be done with trying to make a splash.

My fill of parties and people and white cats called Percy,
I'll have boxed up the contents of my California condo,
left a glossy veranda far behind, taken the colour with me.

I'll get a sausage dog and call her Ruby, sit in a deck chair
on the grass verges of Bridlington, attentive to, consumed by,
the billowing of blossom. I shall speak only in hawthorn.