

Given and received

I thought to give you a blackthorn tree:
because when it flowers in the spring you'll think of me,
and when the blue-black sloes come slow
between the thorns, you'll wait
till frost has softened them
and prick them for the sweetness of sloe gin
to warm us through the winter.

I thought to give you pink carnations
which last longer than the others, simple
in their long-lived, splayed confetti splendour.
Or a diamond – some small eternal torch
to shine a signal every morning.

But after all, I'll be there for all that;
to give you flowers in person,
shine my signals through the duvet,
share the thorns and wine.

For now, remember:
there are only we two here.
There is only this to say.
I give you my hand
because that is what you asked for;
that is what I give most gladly.