The tree house

I don't recall how many summers ago
the children built that tree-house, fixed it solid
in the chestnut branches, loved it, slept there.
In time they fled the nest to lead their lives,
but the tree-house remained. One afternoon
I climbed up into it : warm, snug, drowsy
with sunlight filtering through slats, a spider
guarding his shadowy web, unidentified rustlings,
a wicker chair at the one small window.
I sat there, looking out. The crossed planks framed
so many pictures ! - pigeons clattering past,
two bouncing magpies flirting their tails,
a black cat at the jasmine bush, the wink
of a plane, and clouds, magic shape-shifters
going about their business unaware
that eyes at an earthbound airbound vantage
patiently watched them and mentally painted
their solemn progress as an artist might
who wanted to capture the high, the uncapturable.

Edwin Morgan

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