Twelve River RIPPLES

Bagatelle

Have a go at a Palindrome or Mirror poem:

Spring Tide

This can't be the place.

Water is a glossy strip in the distance,
the line between sky and sea.

A tide that has ebbed too far,
doesn't know when to stop,

this wanderer
who might never come back

like the barely-there footprints of children
scuffing the sand,

this participant in salty tantrums,
snatcher of cliffs, masher of houses to driftwood.

I'm on edge; want to call it in,
reel it back, summon the moon:

come in, come home
all is forgiven.

All is forgiven. Come in,
come home.

Summon the moon, reel it back:

I'm on edge; want to call it in;

snatcher of cliffs, masher of houses to driftwood,
this participant in salty tantrums,

scuffing the sand
like the barely-there footprints of children

who might never come back.
This wanderer

doesn't know when to stop;
a tide that has ebbed too far,

the line between sky and sea.

Water is a glossy strip in the distance.

This can't be the place.

Nicola Warwick

Bagatelle cont.

This mirror poem by Nicola Warwick was commended in The Crabbe Competition 2019. Here are Nicola's words about the process of writing a mirror poem:

I'd seen a few examples of mirror poems but hadn't thought about writing one until I wrote something that I thought was decidedly lacklustre, although it had some good lines and phrases, but was just a bit, well, bland. So, I took a leap of faith and typed up the poem and its mirror image (the lines reflected back on themselves, so the last line in the first part became the first line in the second and so on). Read one way, it told one story, but when read backwards it made less sense. I tweaked the punctuation, the odd comma exchanged for a full stop and vice versa, but not the order of the words. I had to substitute or remove the odd word at the beginning of some lines so that both parts of the poem had a logic. And somehow, the magic happened, the poem began to tell two stories with the same words, one of those stories becoming much darker than the other. Of course, the process was hardly simple; the poem went through several drafts before it arrived at its final version.

Nicola Warwick

Finally - and to bring this issue full circle - take a look at Brian Bilston's mirror poem 'Refugees':
https://nationalpoetryday.co.uk/poem/refugees/