

*Charlie Gracie***Since March 2020**

Four times I've touched a human
aside from the incidental brush of hand.

Magi, as he slung his bodhran onto his back
for the Balquidder road
in the grey smir
a tìoraidh on his strong shooder.

A hug for our Katie and her man
a squeeze for the life of me
on the news of a child next year.

Graham. A handshake on the death of his mother.
Nearing a hunner years she was
when the guid folks that saw her off wove flowers
between her fingers for his final visit.

Charlie Gracie grew up in Baillieston, Glasgow. His poetry collections, *Good Morning*, (2010) and *Tales from the Dartry Mountains* (2020), were published by *Diehard Press*. His first novel, *To Live With What You Are* (2019) was published by *Postbox Press*. His work has appeared in a range of anthologies and journals, with some listed for literary prizes, including the Bath Novel Award, Cambridge Short Story Prize, and Bridport Poetry and Short Story Prizes. He was the 2020 official Scriever for the Federation of Writers (Scotland) and is a former Chair of the Scottish Writers' Centre. He now lives on the edge of the Trossachs.