

## Collector's Item

She picked him up on a Sussex beach in summer  
Sprawled in his sleeping-bag across the scorching pebbles  
He was more a short-term page filler  
Than a Penny Black for her miscellaneous collection.  
She preferred her specimens used  
Reasonably well circulated  
Not being in mint condition herself.

Back in her student, wine bottle-filled flat  
She made a makeshift home for him  
Cosier than his special school's indifferent care.  
He was a casual labourer  
Tattoos in all sorts of places,  
This appealed to the connoisseur in her.

All his young life had been starved of female attention  
Early abandoned to playground bullies  
The kinship of the gang  
He was a discarded item of muscular jetsam  
Breathing easily now in her alluring scent  
Following her at heel with spaniel loyalty.

She knew she was only feeding him titbits  
But, under the crumpled duvet, they could share a joke,  
So, she placed him briefly in her conquest album.

When, at last, the shrivelled September leaves began to fall  
She packed her rucksack and left him without a note,  
College called again and young love needs to wander.  
Besides, she felt a new thematic urge,  
Requiring other special entries for her stock-book pages.