

Orpheus in Homebase

While staring inertly at an array of indestructible coloured bottles wrapped in promises to remove all scum with offers of instant power too, someone I recognise passes by the end of my aisle.

A Rolodex of possibilities spin endlessly inside my head but I cannot pinpoint him. The school gate?
A pub outing perhaps a decade ago? An old friend's husband who made an unwanted pass?
Maybe he's an actor or a newsreader who I've muddled up with life? It's impossible to say.
I shelve the horror about a loss of mind, then grab my usual

Viakal, peer around the corner and watch, as his body disappears into the nursery section where tired and hopeless begonias, african violets and aspidistras appear to reach out of their factory settings as they grope for the mystery man's bum. He plays his lyre and hums a dreamy song which floats above the compost section, piles for every type

of earth, and I decide I need seedlings or a discounted Christmas *Herb-Cup*,
or else - to use in my overgrown and under-tended rented garden, home to an accidental mulch of outdoor furniture, broken toys and fox shit - a pair of William Morris secateurs. I still can't work out how I know him; recognition fails but

amongst the olive trees in a South London DIY superstore, I listen to his song and feel instantly transported and madly in love. But there is no accidental Hollywood bump and subsequent comedic meeting. Instead, I take my unwanted, not-needed consumption and traipse silently to the till, smiling vaguely, so not to be rude when I

say thanks to the woman scanning my shopping. Then I head home to make my bathroom shine.