

*MARIAN CHRISTIE*

**Elevenses**

Squeezed awkwardly between the round completeness  
of 10 and factored convenience of 12,  
11 is the odd one out. We don't have  
11 fingers or toes; we never buy  
11 rolls, or eggs, or long-stemmed roses  
for our lover. In binary notation  
its digits become the three of us, on our  
terrace with coffee and scones in the sunlight  
and birdsong of June, while the radio plays  
*Test Match Special* and 11 extends its  
parallel arms towards the unbounded sky.