

Restraint

Wire-legged ghost, the calf with
a gobán tied around her neck – reminds
me of Uncle Tommy's tiny Dexter Cow,
bred for economy. This is technology
further back – the ingenious exploitation
of animals. And humans too. They line up –
the pig with her leg in a straw noose,
the watched hens in their rustling beehive
houses, cows in fine itchy gold collars,
the hay halter *soaked in cesspool first so the
donkey won't eat it*. Or the strong *old maids*
and *bachelors* who were such *good servants*.
How can we straighten our backs under
the weight of debt?

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