

Rags and Questions

Quite unexpectedly here I stand among the last thousand left on earth
So far removed from the illusion we were born into
In all the dissonance will we understand
That a record of our footsteps is something we should hold onto?
And would we search for every scrap of what we once discarded?
Build a salvage-library to keep our fading knowledge safely guarded

*But it's all gone quiet
Though there's no solace in the mud
We have to try it
Now all our systems and our crimes
Are lying scattered by the flood
There are paths to our survival in the new and the archival
A misjudgement in their balance a risk of nothing left
But a sun-scorched song of sorrow in a moment as we wander
Through the puzzles of the free and bereft*

If we could realign the shards of what we used to think
They'll be bound for annotation in the Institute of Things We Must Not Do
And in that mausoleum in the quiet dark
Illuminate our errors and our shame to inform the new
But for now all take a hold of every rag and every question that we find
So much truth to excavate and so many wounds to bind

The Two Before the Five

Welcome to the Mandelbrot treadmill
Welcome to the never-setting sun
Welcome to the ever-round-the-corner moon
That lays an even light on everyone
Welcome to the circuits in our fingers
Welcome to my eyes across the street
Welcome to the cadence in our tendons
Welcome to the shifting plates beneath our feet

*Hold that right there
While we do we stay alive inside a song
Hurts like honey on your tongue
Keep this right here
Keeping our balance in the vortex
On the two before the five before the ...*

One of these days we'll find something
To hold us in between the ways to fall
One of these ways we might germinate
Instead of making deserts of us all
Melting back to circles in our plastic
Changing in our loops to keep us new
Seems some wheels could use some reinventing
Turns out we have quite a lot to do

Round about the edges of the water we too could slip pentacular
There are strange velvet gravities and beckonings tentacular
But there are calculations and slingshots
To harness tension, harvest momentum in redirected flow
And old delicious cold black hole oblivion is the not the only way that this
could ...

Go to all your liminal parties
And dance among the other grains of sand
Ask the question differently and sideways
I will answer once I understand
Come with me along the furthest tree branch
Maybe we can visualise the wood
Here's the only way this could have been
Except for all the other ways it could

Jackdaw

Coalface jackdaw on my chimney
What do you know?
Where will you go
As we keep hacking and burning?
No capacity for why
Nowhere left to fly
Would you drop out of the sky
All blackening and turning?

*And the earth is riven
But the rivets are forgiven
In the name of disposable days
Do you pick the quickthorn berries from the dust
And ache for us to end our ways?
But feathers can't fight diggers
Nowhere left to fly
So here you stay and all the air turns grey.*

Coalface jackdaw on my chimney
How can it be
That we can't see?
It's not so hard to stop, is it?
On command of just a few
The system shackles all we do
Each day, and mines the people
We stay helplessly complicit

*And the earth is riven
But the rivets are forgiven
In the name of disposable days
Do you pick the quickthorn berries from the dust
And ache for us to end our ways?
How many feathers would it take to fight a digger?
Is this the way we'll stay
As all the air turns grey?*

Vignette No. 2

Last week we said we'd meet for a sandwich and thermos of tea
By the river, but I don't recall – was it you, was it me?
Said "I cannot come out cos I'm strapped to a deadline
And wracked by the constant dystopian headlines"
Then news came in late that the plague had mutated again
So it wasn't to be
So we stayed in our holes while all context collapsed
Reality's cancelled you know: re-draw all the maps!
And there are a few hoarding gold-plated plastic
With their hourly disposable highs
While the dreams and ideals of the possible
Are crushed flat by the market's designs