

## 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