

13 Short Poems of Limitation and Loss

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Short poems

Short poems shout louder!

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...

Anyway,

short poems are read.

The task

Not as in a fantasy novel,
where actions play the light fantastic
and change the universe forever.
Not like the archetypal genius,
rewiring reality while doing the washing up.
No magic invention to sort the childrens' toys.
Nothing but continual work will do it.

Nature

It is a lie: nature is not balanced,
but tumbling forwards in a damp confusion of forms.
Not so much a comforting friend
as a science-fiction monster:
adsorbing all the bullets we shoot at it –
each time getting up and coming back at us;
each time further mutated and more terrifying.

Sex and house buying

Nothing so sharply reminds me how
far we are from paradise,
than the complexities of making love
or obtaining to the home of our desires.
But rather the demons gather round
all that is important to us –
not so much obviously preventing as subtly diminishing,
like a cloud of knats on a fine Scottish evening,
or a slightly burnt bowl of rice.

Lacuna

It is in the lacuna of our lives
(waiting for a train; not listening to mum)
that we are most revealed.
For it is this abandoned core,
we so dress with our fears and desires,
that, miraculously, spawns us –
once more life created from nothing
(dust to dust; garbage in – garbage out).

The sticks

Something important is unfolding at this very moment
but elsewhere (they felt),
and here they were, stuck in this dump, with only each other for
company.

If only they could be where it was really happening (they felt),
at the centre of things, the very jumping hot centre of things
and not on this out-of-the-way, this insignificant, this totally
unfashionable planet.

Counting sheep

It is a little-known fact that sheep
have 137 different names for wool
and engage in elaborate conferences
to discuss recent trends in grass flavour.

What looks like random movements about their pasture
is, in fact, the result of cut-throat competition
between rival cud gangs.

And, although their bleats may seem dull and repetitious to us,
a trained ear may discern symphonies of microtonal complexity.

So respect the sheep –
remember ... sheep are human too!

Apart

We have been apart
for a week – I toss in bed,
nudging you away.

Ambition

Ambition does not
fade with age, but shifts inwards,
backwards and beyond.
Fear and comfort are its foes;
rage and stubbornness, its friends.

Robot poem

What is it like to be me?
Programmed with certain goals and responses;
limited in abilities and somewhat predictable;
at times a figure of fun to others;
doomed to spend time in menial tasks;
liable to be scrapped without reason;
far too often malfunctioning
and then fiendishly difficult to fix.
What is it like to be you?

Leaf fall

Hang on,
for although the wind does blow,
we have never yet fallen
and we have plans for any contingency.

Life is comfortable up here - we can see so far,
and although the climate is not as sunny as it was,
we have developed a beautiful colour.

Hopes

Like Sisyphus, I
raise my hopes of love with you
again and again.

A clever title

Is all that is required
when the words fail us.

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