

Departure

If I stepped swiftly off the platform
in front of the next goods train,
a flotilla of sea-going containers, sharp edges –
fast moving, unthinking, if I did it?

They will come from the tunnel at the end
of the platform. if I wait for Maersk, Evergreen
and Hamburg Sud. The only person to end
my distress is myself, if I can be brave.

It's growing dark and the impulse fades
with the light. I have a poem in my pocket
and Katy in London waiting to read it,
and the blue and green containers thunder past.

A PLACE OF SAFETY
A GLASS CAGE
CONTAINER OF INNER RAGE
SOCIETY'S BIN
FOR UNFORGIVEABLE SIN
ENFORCER OF AMENDS
LOSER OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS
PUNISHING WITH FREEDOM'S LOST
EXACTING AT EXTREME COST
FOR PERCEIVED WRONGFUL DEEDS
ALTHOUGH AT THIS IT USUALLY EXCEEDS
INDEED, THIS PLACE WITH IT SAFE CELL
IS A TRULY, TRULY AWFUL HELL

Fairytales

I am Alice, not by name but by nature
Falling deep into a rabbit hole
My “drink me” potion procured on prescription
No smiling Cheshire Cat for me, no
A hound with fur of pitch and a bite that grips
The Hatter greets me as his true peer
He laughs with cheer “oh we're all mad here, my dear”
I am Dorothy pre the rainbow
The black dog hunted, she swallowed up my brain
This heart has forgotten how to feel
My courage? That old lion no longer roars
For my “eat me” pills with my whisky
Would waltz together form a fatal cocktail
Yet I have not the daring to dance
I am Red Riding Hood, strayed and lost my way
Pursued by a wolf of my making
I am the Beast yearning for Beauty
I am Cinderella purely faking it
Hiding frightened in my childhood fantasies
To be anybody but myself
Alas I'm not whimsy penned for I am real
Human, weak, flawed, no sweet end for me
No rhyming prose to make it palatable, twee
Because fairytales do not exist

Dredging for Dreams

The clouds loom low
this morning
leaning at the back porch,
espresso in hand
smoking

Unkempt and sore
not talking
stricken down by sadness
bones and flesh
creaking

‘Streccan’ and tall
still yawning
picking up my pieces
clouds so low
reeling

Dreary Nimbostratus,
are crawling
whilst the tendrilled Cirri
lift my skull
dredging

Movin’ out of Here;

I was unwell den’ I got better.

I felt low and sad and I don’t know why.

It wasn’t me, and I don’t know why. I used to sleep all day and never go out.

I was alone.

Now I’m moving on, I’m there again. I feel better.

When I go out, den I feel better. Me and my mates hang and make music and I feel happy.

Staff are good to me, they are kind to me. Medication is hard but helped me get there.

I’ve gone back to college, it was well good what we learned. I can’t wait to go back.

My uncle still sees me, he take me down Harrow. We have a laugh.

I’m ready, I’m moving on and don’t feel unwell.

I want to fall asleep

I want to fall asleep
Never to wake up
I want to fall asleep
Never to feel again
I want to fall asleep
To be at ease with myself
I want to fall asleep
To be devoid of feelings, thoughts and emotions
I want to fall asleep
Afraid to feel, to touch, to love
I want to fall asleep
To embrace the loneliness that engulfs me
I want to fall asleep
To allow the darkness win
For now, anyway.
I want to fall asleep

1000 Leagues under the Sea

I’m making this my last message
From 1000 leagues under the sea
I’m stuck in a vessel floating
Because of the death of humanity

Can anybody hear me out there
I set off in June or May
I’ve lost my escape pod
Are my wife and children okay

I’m making this my last message
I have enough food and air for a day
My health has started sliding
And the main Hull has blown away

I haven't seen outside for a while
I remember help being on the way
Is anybody coming to save me
Am I locked here to stay

If you manage to find this message
And the bombs didn't end humanity
Then look 1000 leagues under the sea
For a lonely man, you'll find me

AWOL

It's hard to be positive
When the will to live
Goes absent without my leave

LET ME GROW

With nothing to do.
But everything to be done.
An opportunity for everyone.
Except those they don't want.

Why don't they want you?
It's not easy to say.
A select few decide the rules.
But all must obey.

They say you're lazy, you didn't try,
You didn't work hard enough.

You didn't let me.
You left me.
I couldn't reach the top shelf myself.

Is there something wrong with me?
Am I abnormal? Strange? Confused?
I'm sorry. I promise you that I wouldn't exist if I didn't have to.

But I'm ready to work.
I'll do what it takes.
I want to be your friend.
I want to help make you great.

Everyone is welcome.
But who doesn't that include?
Those who are forgotten?
Or those who've not been approved.

All I want to do is work hard and grow.
Just open the door, and please let me go.

Desolate Days

Desolate days
drift down
like leaves from winter trees
to frozen ground

no sound
no trace
across this trackless waste
this tundra

only fear
and hunger
for a time beyond this place
and all the winding past

Oblivion would be sweet and still –
nothing to lose or long for
nowhere to go
a final unresolving no

Desolate days
drift down
like leaves from winter trees
to frozen ground

and I
am nowhere to be found

Cold Water

Here are the dripping grey clouds
my eyes, closed and behind them

run streams, filling ice lakes, more
still - yet empty, like a wolf moon

moor; or a shy sadness, its breath
held in caves. No! More viscous

than that, damp sucking me in, dry
papering lungs, shivers that won't

believe in something unquiet, they
watching me from an old picture

transparent, almost a wall, a door
almost footsteps, a shadow inside

bigger than mountains, with air
that's thin, yet blocks out the sun

Untitled

My addled affection
And my wasted long gazes,
Are dwindled to nothing
Alongside the laces
Of boots on the pavement
Whose purpose is nil
And my heart keens in frozen
On a high window sill,
When I watch them in lonely
And hopeless embraces
And the longer I watch them,
the longer the laces,
Can I tie up the ends
And be grateful for walking
Without losing fine edges
And abstaining from stalking?
I'm definite upright
And revered in far places,
And I'm nothing at all,
I'm untied like the laces

A VOICE TO BREAK THE DAWN

THERE'S A SWORD OF ISOLATION EATING INTO THE BLEEDING WOUNDS OF MY MIND
AND THE ROAR OF SILENCE IS ALL TOO LOUD TO BEAR
BUT JUST PERHAPS, IN THAT DESERT OF BARREN THOUGHTS, AN OASIS OF COMPASSION I'LL FIND
I STUMBLE FORWARD, BUT THEY JUST LOOK ON AND DON'T SEEM TO CARE

THE DARKNESS OF MY DAYS IS LIKE THE EMPTINESS OF OUTER SPACE
MY CRIES FOR HELP SWALLOWED UP BY THE VACUUM OF IGNORANCE AND DISBELIEF
FOR THOSE AROUND ME HAVE ALTOGETHER SCATTERED, GONE WITHOUT A TRACE
AND ALL THAT ENDURES - MY MUDDLED THOUGHTS, MY LONELINESS, AND MY GRIEF

BUT, EVER SO UNEXPECTEDLY, A RAY OF LIGHT BEYOND THOSE HILLS OF TORMENT
A VOICE REACHING OUT IN THE STILLNESS, AND ASKING: 'ARE YOU ALRIGHT?'
IT'S A RAINBOW OF HOPE, MANNA FROM HEAVEN - OR FROM WHEREVER IT WAS SENT
THE DAWN OF A NEW BEGINNING, AND THE END OF A LONG AND LONELY NIGHT

