

Quarantine In The City: A Pamplet

Hazel Rogers

Breathless

I am so cold tonight.

The people walk past

and they smell of soap, musk, and sex –

they stink of it.

They walk past, faster and faster

and people become pavestones,

bricks, and mortar

people become ballustrades,

gravel, and rock

and I realise that I cannot smell the people.

I smell the city,

and it reeks of people, running,

breathless, and alone.

Rain in my room

The rain always sounds heavier in here.

I can hear every drop.

When the wind blows

It sounds like wind screen wipers

Are brushing the droplets

Off of my windows,

Like my room is a car

And is drifting through the sodden night.

I hear a train go by.

The carriages make clucking sounds

As they move.

The house rumbles when the train moves.

I lie awake and listen to the train move.

I think of the lights

And of the faces of people on the moving train

Sheltered from the wind, and the rain,

Clucking along in the lonely dark

Carriage

By carriage.

Watching a fight break out on one Friday evening, when the pubs close at 10pm

And suddenly – man!

Robust fighting machine turned dog

Dogged snarls, faces, paws, to release

The tension of living, life, a drag

O' blessed time of weekday's end! Sweet, honeyed hours

Made for leering looks and puffed-up breasts;

Lady goats and buxom chests;

The young in packs of howling cubs

Prowling the dark, they move as one –

Fight! The angst of living! The pain of living!

All become one! Fighter! Fightee! Fight-watcher!

Fight-stopper! Liquor flies in dynamite showers!

The biting chill of nighttide hour!

Squealing pigs and mottled hounds

Claim the night and hallow'd ground

They bite, they scream, they cry aloud

The pain of living! The lost and found!

The angst of life in hellish sound!

Then all disperse, and none remain

Save I, the night, and whispering rain.

Toilet love

As I sit here, defecating,

I watch the shadow of the apple

Beat like a membrane

In the heart of the wall.

I think of the days when I say something else before I say

“Good morning” to you.

I always regret not saying “Good morning” first,

And saying something else

Instead.

Running down an empty street at night with you

And it erupts, with such terrifying zeal
Illuminating the black thickness with peals
Of shrieking, tyrannous splendour.
We are one with it, we too burst
Unto the dark, cackling and howling
Fire! Fire and flame and sparkling
Are the bodies, and wild are the eyes
That dart the moors like glowing flies
And bright, bright are the eyes that light
The loneliness of winter nights.