

## A CHRISTMAS AU-REVOIR

It is not clear

What we hoped for, this Christmas.

But I know with certainty

That we were promised we would be back

To some sort of normality by December 2020.

But Covid-19 had other plans

And Christmas preparations quickly fell apart.

For some, whole days were stifled in house-jails

For others, Christmas plans became only viable online

And for many, tears and grief scared away

Any thoughts about Christmas.

Furlough payments continued

To support families

But thousands of children were still hungry.

Lives paused, interrupted, disrupted,

Scarred, may be for ever.

It is difficult to appreciate

The value of perseverance

Under a deluge of debt, hunger and disease.

Stop talking about resilience

The killer virus is still on the loose

Uncontained

Unrestrained

Condemning people to

Silence, tears and grief.

Festive decorations and bright Christmas lights

Defiantly

Seek to conceal the intense suffering

To disguise the deep wrinkles on our faces

In such a short space of time.

Every day four hundred people are pronounced dead.

An unbearable statistic

Weighing us down

Keeping us locked in house retreats

Making us crave a warm embrace

Longing for the feeling of shaking hands in the streets

Of holding hands in walks by the sea.

The online world is cold, insulating

isolating

With no risk of Covid transmission

But with an increased risk of fear, distress

And hate transmission.

Trust me,

Open a window in time,

There will be another Christmas,

Down the line,

In time.

We have been forced to be strangers of the world,

Silent passengers of repeat lockdowns  
But the pandemic has also made us apt shape-shifters  
Has trained us to hold our balance  
On dangerous ground  
In a dangerous season.

I am not alone in this  
You are not alone in this  
The whole country is in a state of near lockdown  
Travelling to our loved ones' houses is permitted  
Only on Christmas day  
And tougher restrictions  
Will be announced on Boxing Day.

A killer winter has tightened its grip  
The delusive hope of a merry Christmas  
Has been abandoned for good  
This is a paused Christmas  
In paused lives  
An uncongenial now  
In a devastating pandemic year.

Open the window  
Let fresh air in  
Open a window in time  
Let simple dreams and hopes in  
There will be another Christmas,  
Down the line  
In time.

## A CHANCE FOR A RE-THINK

Blue is not a colour we actually see  
But we believe it to be true  
For life is unimaginable without  
Seas, lakes, rivers and the sky.  
Neither can hope be seen  
But not only do we believe in it  
We feel its warm energy in our minds  
And its deep impulse in our hearts  
As we long for life  
Even when life is intertwined with death.

60.000 confirmed new Corona cases  
Are recorded on a day  
And 880 deaths  
Mind blowing statistics.  
Scientists can calculate our probability  
To die prematurely  
Over an unrecognising land  
On a homeless earth  
Battered by the pandemic,  
Divisions, agony and anger.

The third national lockdown since March  
Threats of fines if we live our homes  
For non-essential reasons  
No spectacular exceptions

To Government's inept management of public health risks.

No meadow of peace to lie down

No pebble beach to allow thoughts to abscond

No liberties to reclaim

No lazy surrenders to daily routines

While ambulance sirens are sound controllers

Of our paused lives.

Only the uninvited turmoil of

Anguish

As we sit down in tears

Longing for the end of the pandemic.

Hoping to be able to live our lives

Mourning for all it stole from us

Sensing our exhaustion

Feeling our mental drainage.

But amidst the hardship and deprivation

A strange recovery occurs

Nearby our inner lighthouse

That continues to shine in the storm.

Like seafarers seeing the flickering light

At the end of a long voyage

We become

Less furious

Less fearful

Less threatened.

Here is a unique chance to re-think  
What kept us in bondage for so long  
What was feeding us with daily illusions  
What was distracting us from *our time*  
Preventing us from  
Finding *our home*  
Now, then, in the world  
Of *nowHere*.