The Weekend
(BREXIT)

The weekend after –
The box wide open
Empty now
Except for our hysteric laughter –
The demons fly this way and that
Wreaking havoc and heeding not
Pandora’s call,
why should they
Why should they care at all
It’s party time
See the shadows dancing on the wall.

Its party time
Summer fête
Open garden day –
Pimms and strawberry
Real ale
Reality to wash away –

The elegant greyhound
Audrey Hepburn of her race
Lays a regal paw
On the squirming puppy’s brow
and the little fellow takes the blessing
turning tumbleweed in joy
and the beach tree over-head is unaware
it offers shade to strangers
why should it care

in a house nearby
the cat waits patiently to play
with broken laces.

And the rain falls hard
but with no trace of sympathy
Offers solace only for true innocence
and that is not the case for likes of you and me.
The Weekend

And in another party not that far away
the barbecue
smokes out of the garage,
and an old man fearing tumour on the brain
hands out all on paper plates

And a woman, aged eighty-six
Face like desert drought
Will even miss
the strawberries
and cream
For she has discovered
a family she never knew exist –
can’t wait to tell her brother,
hand trembling,
poring over khaki photos
of a strange man in even stranger places
he smiles set prime to play at soldiers
and then the browning telegram
her mother’s mother hid well away
never in her mind to be on display –
now thin cellophane holds it fast in place
easy to swiftly turn the page
and let not death wipe away the smile
It's party time –

And the grass grows unheeded
round the roots of the tree
Or the concrete of the garage floor
As it fights its way to light
And in time, the time of grass
The grass will win eventually –
And will not shed a tear for gardeners
Or long forgotten croquet on the lawn
Or the fading smell of dog piss
And this is it – the grass will win
With perhaps one perfect daffodil
To worship

And the lady has missed
The final call for tea –
European Citizen

Not so many scones next year
We cannot afford such luxury
There’s war to prepare for
And dangerous strangers
Banging on the door –
Jack Nicholson with a different accent
But the same axe –
The same intent –
And the cellophane will curl
Under their hot breath –
And the soldier will be released
And he is the small boy now kneeling at her knee
And asking who am I, to you, and you to me –
And she wants to say
You are my beauty
You are my beauty –
I won’t be here when they come
To take you away
And the old man gently taps the plaster on his head
the thousandth time today –
His wife is counting
And there are forest fires in California –
Best thing out for grass
And in the rain here
Grass the constant winner

In blue bucket seats my neighbour
tells me of his foster son
a child once upon a time
forced to eat off the floor
at his father’s feet
Now he turns eighteen
And the system of support falls away
leaves him lonely on a stranger’s street –
but salvation is a game called cricket
he is selected for the young men’s squad
and on the eve in fit of unnamed anger
he fists the fridge –
and listens as the bones go click click click
no more bowling for this boy
The Weekend

no young men’s team and I wonder –
have we now
only the power to destroy
our own dreams?
And the shades on the wall
Are overcome with joy.
And what do we feel,
Do we feel at all?
Anger, impotence, and rage
Hopelessness and disgrace.
Pull up the sticks
Throw away the bales
Take bat and ball home
Drink real ales
Go home to the cat
And that bloody boot lace.
No.
No.
Not in my name
Now is not the time to quit the game
Let’s not the shame
Claim us
sodden as we are with endless rain
let us shiver
like a careless dog
soaking those that are hidden
in the shadows –
let them squelch home
let our dog roam free
looking for the perfect tree
to cock a leg upon –
the tree does not care.
The grass searches everywhere
To find its beauty –
The straight back stillness
Of that gold remembered daffodil.

Then let us all
Be lovers of beauty
Not knowing what beauty is –
European Citizen

Searching for its truth
Not knowing what truth is –
But uncertainty is certainly part of this-
And love is more than just a kiss
Kiss is not always good –
Love bites draw blood –
We give to vampires
In Paul Smith suits
Or some such black attire
Our votes, our hopes, our very souls
For them to toss away into the fire

And you were told
Vampires were merely fiction
the shadows could not really bite your throat
When that would be their only dream
And dream is merely reality
Seen through a haze of lace –
The face you wake to –
More tired than when you went to bed –
Is not the face of the living
But of the living dead –
Don’t let them feed
Upon your neck
Wear a scarf, a tie, cravat
A high collared dress
And most of all shout no –
Sometimes that’s harder than saying yes
But do not forget
No shame
Not in my name
Join with the grass
Search for the still golden
Golden still
daffodil.

Stephen Lowe
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