

Moments in Time Maria Whatton

Listen

Can you see time glisten?

At the edge

of memory.

A drop away

From yesterday

today

Time.

Slips

Away.

Let's begin

With an old man, who has lived on this earth for one hundred years,
guarding the entrance of a great Cathedral.

He ushered us in

to see the moon

dangling between

candles and altar.

The war wasn't very long ago, he said

It came and went

Ike April snow

We stood our ground

And fought the foe

We lost our sons

*And do you know?
A world destroyed began to grow
it looked into the face of space
deciding it was the place
to land two men up on the moon
a memory we all might keep
one small step, one giant leap
a rather misquoted line
that was 1969.*

The old, old man stood back a while
and that was when we heard the past
in voices, whispers, slow and fast
of that one time the world stood still
and held it's breath until
those brave men returned
to earth wlth all they'd learned.

VOICES

Listen
Can you see time's missing?
From the place it began
That it's melted away
From yesterday
today

Time.
Has slipped
Away.

Our guide sat down and then he sighed,
You can't push back a brimming tide
I've lived so long you need to know
These moments come, these moments go
So listen with an open heart
Listen from the very start
Be the Witness to all you see
You are the link in history.
One story boils another one
Tales told well are never gone

We left that place and Christmas past
A new year came, the old outcast
We all forgot about the man
As rumours spread from Wuhan.
An unknown plague began to spread
In mass graves they buried their dead.
The virus came in gasps of breath
Across the seas on ships of death

Across the globe on every screen
Twitter, facebook, magazines

An unknown virus Covid 19

There was no cure and no vaccine.

Listen

Can you see time's missing?

From the place it began

That it's melted away

From yesterday

today

Time.

Fell

Away.

March 2020

The first death from Covid 19 in Britain

And once again the world stands still

Just as the old man said.

Homes are no longer homes

They are transformed into offices, prisons, refuges, retreats.

Isolation. Separation.

In Italy families sing distantly together from their balconies.

Here we clap for the NHS on Thursdays

On pavements a new politeness is the six-foot swerve.

Hospitals pray for protective equipment

Shops are cleared of disinfectant

Care homes are left with only courage for help

Children place rainbows in windows

A cough can clear a stadium

Hugs are banned

Medics,

Bus drivers, neighbours, warehouse workers,

Move in with mettle.

Every day statistics rise higher and higher,

The graphs in briefings are soaring mountains,

cliff edge peaks.

We are not staring upwards

We are staring inwards

Travelling to a new planet

That is beneath our feet

The planet of unknowing

Through my window

I look to the old woman in the moon

but I cannot see her

So instead of staring upwards

I stared inwards to the moon in the woman.

Lunar I say, Are you there? I need your help.

Emma's Lunar story

The surface of our planet is now
the moondust of the duvet,
the sea of crisis, the ocean of storms
All is still, frozen with craters of fear
The Eagle of Doom has landed.

We are bound by rules that must not be broken
Breaking them can bring death
But some rule makers
Are rule breakers
Stay home
Save lives
Protect the NHS

By June 4th the death toll in Britain is 39,940
Track and trace have been traced and tracked
But no one can find it
Stay alert
Control the virus
Save lives

Wear masks!
Don't wear masks!
A nightingale no longer sings in Berkeley Square
for it has changed into a hospital

Ground control to Major Tom
Who bravely walks with a zimmer
There's something wrong
Can you hear us Major Tom can you hear?
Don't wear masks
Wear masks!
The masks we were wearing to meet the masks we met
Are falling away revealing who we really are
and the masks we are wearing
to save super spreading
hold our breath
hide our smiles
muffle our words.
Can you hear me Major Tom?
Can you hear?
On 9th November its announced on the news
a possible vaccine
a definite breakthrough.

Listen says the old man
Lighting a candle in the old cathedral
We are the stories
and stories shine light
We are the moon rays
That brighten the night
We are the vessels

*That carry the treasure
The loop of our actions
Paid measure for measure
You are the watchers
Who see the sun rise
You view the moon
In the darkest of skies
I am an old man
You are the youth
I pass you this flame
To illuminate truth*

Can we dare tell new tales?
Can a world torn down begin to grow?
Can the silence hold the seed?
Of what we might already know?
The worlds misdeeds are magnified
What shall we lose? What should we keep?
Will we be brave enough to make
One small step one giant leap?

We cannot hug we cannot hold,
but we have creativity,
Into the cold, and through the dark,
the bleak, stark days of lockdown three.

We've caught the bitter wind that's blown
We've stored the rain of grieving tears
We've held the dread of the unknown
And wrestled with the worst of fears.
We hold our hands toward you now
You folk of future memory
And gift our tales for you to take
please understand this mystery:
Without its roots the tallest tree
Will wither, perish, fail to grow
so share the stories that you know
in wisdom we are family.