

WATCHING A TRAIN WRECK IN THE DISTANCE

smoke and spark *over there*
impossible to intervene or interfere

sound out of sync with suffering
instinct for calamity and survival

dazed distress impossible to infer
others' screams hurt silence

now more than ever
because and despite

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HERETIC CHAPEL (Albert Oehlen)

exploding eyeball
sudden shout
big moustache

an emphatic NO
and the coloured doorbell
finger pressing hard

little sense of quiet
only a scrawled mouth
saying anything nothing now

sideways confusion
negative shapes
and caricature

full steam a head
ship shape dribbled
monotone

no shimmer of silence
no layering of paint
fairground delirium

she rises from the water
limbs awry limb less
patterns stacked up

depthless
'not as good
as it thinks it is'

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END OF SEASON

The scan was clear, unofficially anyway
(I never heard back from the doctor)
and autumn is here now: spiderwebs
and clouds, darker early evenings.

Martin got me listening to music again,
although he likes rock in a way I don't;
and the future got me worrying about work,
although I'm sure it's all perfectly manageable.

I'm tired of the same things happening again,
years spent playing out repeated motifs;
bored with answering emails, looking after
those who can't organise themselves.

Bomb damage maps clearly show where
the past exploded and fault lines developed,
how I rely on mistakes of memory and artifice,
to conjecture a life from fictions and photos.

You send me emails from your online trips,
missives from journeys I can't undertake.
The raised road above cast shadows
across the small space I inhabit below.

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NEWBIGGIN

Seaweed, shells, smooth glass, and pebbles
are no longer enough for my girls
but my pockets are stuffed full.

I hope to polish the future as we walk,
stones turned until shiny as the rest,
coat pockets weighed down

with worries from elsewhere.

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