

Free!

Free!

Please pick up, take home and enjoy reading

THESE
STRANGE
DAYS

A zine of poems about lockdown

created communally by people of the Forest of Dean

Hello dear reader,

Thank you for picking up a copy of this zine, I hope you enjoy it. My name is Sally Jenkinson, I am poet from Cinderford.

In July and August 2020, I asked people all over the Forest to lend me a line, a thought, a phrase or even single word that revealed something about their personal experience of lockdown. Then I chopped up all the words and ideas and spread them all over my kitchen table and reformed them into these poems. The result was this Forest-wide collaboration - a socially-distanced, communally-written book of poems, recording and exploring the experience of these strange days we are living through, alone and together.

All the poems in this collection are created entirely from words submitted by Forest residents. I may have added the occasional 'and' or 'the' or changed the tense of something to hold the whole thing together, but aside from that, these are the words of our community. I would like to sincerely thank everyone who bravely and generously lent their words to this project, I am very grateful!

This project was a micro-commission by Canopy Creative Network.
www.canopycreativenetwork.wordpress.com

If you have any thoughts or feedback about this project please get in touch, I would love to hear from you!

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August 2020

I hear birds sing

1

When my daughter is old enough
I'll tell her how we crept through the Heywood
Empty streets and silent Pub
the air is clear No cars or vans not a sound.
and her softly flapping breath
listening to the song birds and the cuckoo
Noticing birds, as never before.
peeling her out of the sling at home
revealed an angel in sweat on my chest

The world has turned downside up and outside in.

2

The time at home has, in many ways, been a gift
No swimming. Long walks.
the baby's chirrups in the washing up bowl
the heat of the house and the garden
I'll remember 'Daddys home'
far too busy learning to walk!
shine gladness into evenings dark
hopeful and full of thanks.
for forest and family.

3

Covid19 has revealed what we knew

They are careless of everything but the market.

. Their staff deserve respect.

warehouse staff, home delivery drivers, postal workers, bus drivers, bin men
and women, kept us going.

The low paid shop workers,

Do I trust Boris Johnson. No.

Bluff and bluster.

Narrow minded,

petty minded,

close minded

Careless with facts

, short sighted,

social care decimated

government lack of care

isolation,

struggle to manage

lockdown . has only made me want to leave

Like the Sirens in myths

for kinder shores.

The year of the Corona virus is upon us and we

(4)

none the wiser and My world shrunk.

and I would say

but at the time i

I felt
trapped Cornered?!

leaving a cornered animal to its fate,

my guilt and shame

being awkward as usual

relief from the day to day facade

I wonder if I will make that life I dreamed of.

(5)

four masks,

Two personal bottles of sanitiser,

and on my body.

Baffled by biosecurity

and a large Dettol spray.

Is that enough?

6

Pain of not seeing family /
some moments of profound sadness

Lockdown gave too much time
Pain in legs from inactivity and
worsening arthritis-
Miss dancing.

I feel reduced. My common purpose gone.
domestic abuse hidden but

This surely disrupts the continuum, Spacetime, /
and Mum being quite poorly at home,
and she won't understand
and she'll think I'm silly
it has been hell being cut off from my ill mother /
I will not breathe easily
. My mind map reduced /
and on my body.

Where else can you go?
This can't go on forever.

It be a fact universally acknowledged
that an owd vorest dyke
in plague times
must be sadly lacking in garden soirees
with other faerie folk.

7

it coincided with lambing
and sheep shearing on the farm
basically it didn't effect me at all
because I wasn't going anywhere anyway...

Space

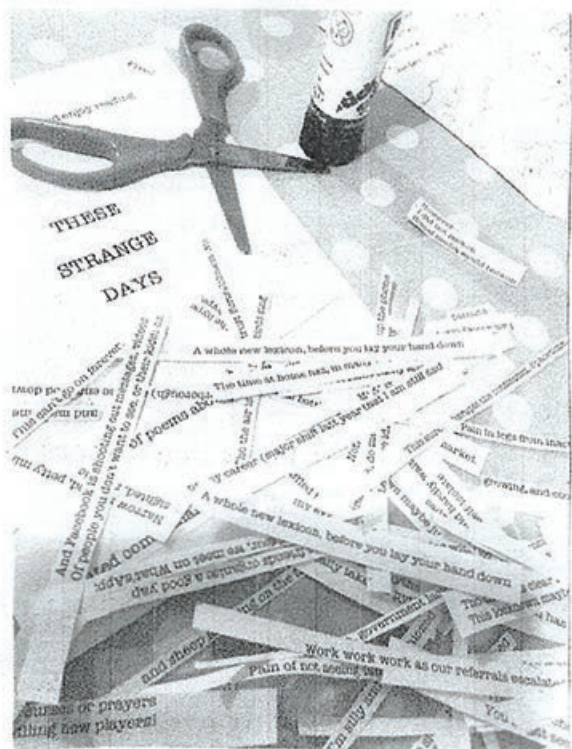
9

Walk woods during lockdown.
I saw in a distant clearing
it were lovely

always looking for silver linings
small emboldened muntjac deer
barking a warning for all to keep out
of the bear hunt
they have heard from adult whispers.

a vivid memory of walking into a field
noticing natures bounce back
clear blue skies and no other sound than bird song
probably never going to happen again

When we're finally released, after curses or prayers /



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31/50