

O O T L I N

On publication day
my books sit in a warehouse
in the dark, very much alive,
deadly as they ever will be,
whilst I am in the doctors
with my hair falling out,
rashes that won't go,
skin coming away on my hands;
the roots of a tree
sprout out through my stomach
and pull the doctor down
to where I can whisper (again).
It's been twenty-five years . . .
of getting sicker and sicker and sicker,
so I am fucking here . . .
in his office;
out the way at least of fascists, for a second,
do something, just one fucking thing . . .
that isn't looking at 'care' or prior 'drugs' or 'assaults'
on my file, or the tattoos on my arms,
or the fatness of my arse,
do fucking something!

Rather than each year just watch me get closer to death.

THERE'S A PROBLEM IN THE ARTS

Abusers, firstly, filing in,
then the cliques,
the tall poppy cutters,
the eternal side-eye,
the kids whose mummies and daddies
made them feel they were
the very most special
those who spit on strangers' souls
to soothe their ego
say it's only me me me me me me me me me meeeeeee eeeeeeee
eeeeeeememmemememmee –
it's an industry
for cunts!
Where's the fucking poetry in it?
They just can't be adored
enough; hiding their posh qualifications
so they can act like they are authentic, or working class.
So much hating
on the purest talent;
when they see it,
they blink as hard as they can
for a long time:

pretend to all they can't see it,
pretend to all they can't hear it,
make little digs in public or suck up to absolute vile predators
knowingly, whilst pretending to be feminists,
throwing those who always had far less than them

in their actual life,
under all the buses,
then running them over repeatedly
whilst waving their collections over their heads;
they will do literally anything,
to think that they are – it.
There is a problem in the arts,
I've seen so many of our greatest writers be erased –
by all the above
it makes me think of Sandie Craigie,
she would have totally got this.

NINETY SECONDS TO MIDNIGHT

That's what we got on the doomsday clock . . . closer than it's ever been, what does it mean? what does it mean? Send the children into school where they fight fight fight because the adults are fucking insane and their planet is ninety seconds to midnight . . . scientists say it is set for collapse – ten seconds closer than it has ever been, what does it mean? What does it mean? Tell the children all the lullabies and lay them down to rest whilst psychopaths kill the planet and we all think we did our best and just sit back now whilst they do it until they turn to kill us all . . . it's a malevolent evil to leave the writing on the wall, I don't care for the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, I don't care to know children and other humans are freezing to death, or dying in fright whilst the bombs and the soldiers go bang bang bang. Who let the world be run by psychopaths? This is just a home run like the Son of Sam where they get to kill kill kill for the sheer fuck of it . . . there is no other reason to destroy so many lives, than you exist on evil and anyone cut too pure with hatred and a total lack of empathy . . . it should cancel them out for all major jobs . . . certainly running fucking countries and anything to do with being in charge of armies, or fucking bombs, it's ninety seconds to midnight and I do not sleep well – nightmares every night and another day knowing that hell is a human creation and it is fed by malignant people; it is fed by money; it is fed by greed; there is no doubt about it we humans are not even remotely created equal – those who hurt others in such a fucking psychotic way are so far beyond demented and from each and everyone one of them this planet and her people should be permanently protected . . . so put in a clause for all of humanity, do it now for fuck's sake – don't let psychopaths run countries or the legal systems or the state . . . don't settle for more

seconds on the doomsday clock – this is our world right now to save and we truly cannot stop . . . because the children we are leaving need us right fucking now . . . not tomorrow; to alter every trajectory they should never have to inherit and all the injustices no life could ever merit . . . and isn't it ironic that the scientists who designed the Doomsday Clock also designed the Atomic fucking Bomb – scientists, commissioned to do that, instead of stopping it, instead of altering it, instead of globally refusing to do anything that might murder even one more person, ever . . . for the rest ay humankind, we have it in us to change – everything but psychopaths took over the whole fucking show and they will destroy all of our lives cos there's a dark energy in this universe with true evil at its core and it is resident in the human story and we cannot take this any more – it's ninety seconds to midnight, what is wrong, what is wrong, what is wrong, with humanity, what is wrong? . . . that for all we have achieved we have been told to settle – for this, blood-stained, song.

LAST ORDERS

I picked up the tab
for your entire fucking life . . .

I paid for yours – with mine,
I am still paying.

Still, you didn't understand
my reputation in the next world

Did ye, Dad?

Until now, just as you've arrived . . .
It's last orders at the bar unnaw, so good luck – wi aw that.

MEMORIAL

When you died
I had nothing to hold on to,

others had memories,
shared stories,

a place they could go
to bring your body back

to warmth,
while I got only

what you gave me,
which was nuhin

but pain & so
much worse; yer death

made me remember
how worthless

I was to you,
you tainted me.

In this memorial
of all the lives

you never attended . . .
mine was the first.

When I was tiny (three)
I used to sleep in a dark room

that felt like the whole world
had turned black

& I'd never get back
to the earth, or people,

a total sensory deprivation,
an isolation without light . . .

my name was taken,
like all I'd never get to be,

I was so far from safe,
just me & an unbearable ache,

cos nobody was coming,
not for me, not ever –

whatever I had to survive
it was on me; it's taken nearly

forty-six years
to be able to feel that particular

level of pain and loss again,
from that exact time,

I don't know how you died
for sure, even the most basic

decency was never afforded
in my direction, not on birth,

or in the end, just jagged
hatred from other's fronds,

even more barbs to cut into my skin
I was never a daughter

not in death, not in life,
for your actions,

I have paid so, very, many, times.