

POEM OF THE WEEK

THERE BE VOICES

In the landscape of crashed cars and dead bodies
I'll tell you. I tell you: there be voices, I can hear them
Don't tell me, it's my imagination. I can hear them
In clear stereophonic sound

At the end of the world (as we knew it), there is silence
Yes, there is silence. Not absolute silence, as I had often
Imagined it to be, but silence: punctuated by the sound of my breathing
And periodically, the sound of children calling out for their parents

Women calling for their children, their husbands. It's scary being lost and alone
The causes of the damage and destruction on that scale are many and varied
The results are basically the same. Women, children, and men lost and frightened
Where can we go to be safe? Is our money any good? Money? What money?

It's all on plastic; all the machines are out of action. You can't go up to an ATM
pull out a gun (real or imagined), and say in a gruff voice, "Money or your life"
A dead ATM is a dead ATM. It would be a simple case of turning on the power
If you had the power to turn on. Is being powerless; the ultimate state of being powerless

Cars scattered, going nowhere, nowhere to go. All those people dead - or dying
Who's going to check and do a triage? You? Me? There be voices
I hear them in my head. That silent landscape is full of voices
Voices that have long lost the luxury of making choices.

Why, they're dead
Maybe I am, also.
That's why I hear them

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