

Bubble Muzzle

Kae Tempest

Here's a poem
It goes like this

You're off to work again
You need to make a wage
Although you kind of feel like it's a waste of days
Measuring the hours of your life and the paper made
And now your pleasure is devoured, right?
It's getting tedious to take the pace

I mean you're sick of staying late
And rising early with a day to face
You know, punching them numbers in that database
And pretending that you care about the day-to-day
Of these office politics
Man they're enough to make your faith decay

And so this morning you were staring in the mirror with your razor blade
And you noticed with a shiver that your face was grey
Because you realised
You're actually, genuinely pissed off
Every single time your train's delayed
And you got this weird feeling
Like you're beginning to fade away

But it's cool though
Because you've got this girlfriend that you've been seeing for a while now
And you love her but you don't really feel the same when she smiles now
I mean you only ever make love with the lights out
She don't really seem as on it as she used to
But it's fine, right?
It's fine

Because now's the time for settling down
The time for making do
So you go home
You turn your brain off
And you rent a film off pay-per-view
Sometimes you wonder what your younger self would make of you
You're happy, in a way
You're really happy, right?
Like any of your mates from school
And it's true the cooler ones all fucked off and got them arts jobs
In Shoreditch
And now you meet 'em in the bar as you watch 'em carry on like heart-throbs
And it always ends up messy no matter how chilled out it starts off
All of a sudden you've gone and got yourself involved in a danceoff

You're like, "mate this is great, I mean I am rushing my arse off"
Stood there feeling like you're on some sort of ride you can't stop
Next thing you're in the chippy rowing with some prick who's got a fast gob
Just another night to wake up from and laugh off

And so life goes on the bubble
It's tunnel vision all week, right?
And our weekends, well they're for seeing double
So how we ever going to see that we're in trouble?

We're like a dog wagging its tail expecting a treat
Cause it's learned how to put on its own filthy, stinking muzzle

And so life goes on in the bubble
It's tunnel vision all week
And our weekends, well they're for seeing double
So how we ever going to see that we're in trouble?
We're like a dog baring its teeth, protecting its own muzzle

Meanwhile, you're walking through the city with your shoulders squared
You're like "man, I'm from the End, you lot don't know the load I bear"
You're looking at the people that you pass with a ferocious glare
These suits and ties going on like they don't know you're there
You're sick of feeling insignificant
Your ambition's as brilliant as anybody else's
But your temperament is militant
Cause every other day brings the death of an innocent
This inner city living is seeing more wakes than Finnegan
And all around you is suspicion, power games and fast living
Everybody's trying to get paid
You can't even rave without someone getting stabbed over something
It's a crying shame
Because you're like, "Fuck the higher plane, I want a fast car and a diamond chain"

It feels like everybody's out here trying to find their fame
They want their names to ring out like the alarms before the sirens came
They wanna leave the people shaking like a lion's mane
Cause they've been denied for so long
They're so sure they have a prize to claim

So tell me, is it time for grief
Or is it time for blame
I'll stand right here and tell you lot it's time for neither, mate
It's a time for change
Cause where I'm from young boys are given sentences before they've even learned to sign their name
And all you're trying to do is find your way through the lies and pain

Although that said
You have got you heart set on some new kicks
You want them fresh black Nikes with the blue stitch, right?
So you been putting in the hours
Moved a few bits
You're like "what's the point in aiming any higher? It seems useless"

And so it's small victories and our city's full of rubbish
Where our children are either overfed or undernourished
Where our talent is suffocated before it can be encouraged
And our true selves are completely ignored

So tell me
What's the point in hoping for more
When there are soldiers at war
And they are dying without knowing what for
And all you want to do is think nothing, sit and smoke up a drawer
Mate, we're going nowhere
Like a boat on the shore oblivious to the whole ocean
We're a token of a broken, divorced generation whose folks don't know the rapport
Don't get me wrong
Just like everybody else here I have my rent to pay
All I'm trying to say is it feels to me like we're so caught up in the every

day

We've given all our strength away

So

Life goes on in the bubble

It's tunnel vision all week

And our weekends, back off, Tempest, cause they're for seeing double, right?

Well how we ever going to see that we're in trouble?

We're like a dog wagging its tail running off to fetch its own muzzle

And so life goes on in the bubble

It's tunnel vision all week

And all weekends, well they're for seeing double

So how we ever going to see that we're in trouble?

Unless we look each other in the eye and say,

"Do you know what? There's a lot more to my life than the every day struggle

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