

Three Sided Coin

Kae Tempest

Retell the old tales
Retail's complete hell, we need some detail
That's why I've been staring at the stem of this plant
For like the last day and a half, the last day and a half, the last
Now the three sided coin buys the bow legged calf
And we've been sucking out the milk
From its mother's teat incessantly
So come on, pump us full of nothingness
And hear us sing the melody
And watch us dance the thin line
Between the in thing and integrity
Vacuum-packed, shrink-wrapped, wartime spam-bots
Following the stories of the day
In a hands-off, dandruff-in-your-sandwich kind of way
Infinite distraction
Now the distance between objects
Can be measured out in fractions
But the distance between people
Is a scale that we can't balance
We're frail, our hearts haven't had time to try fathom
The scales of old dragons are nails in gold coffins
This island of England
Oh, England
We set out from this place
For murder and murder
And then we squared it away like it did not occur
Now when people are lost, they need people to join
But beware of the three-sided coin
And when people are hurt, they need people to blame
But beware of the fear you can't name

I take the bins out, it's raining
The kids are on the pavement with their hoods up
Waiting for buses
And on the radio, someone's complaining
Saying until now, they never discussed it in public
Same thing as yesterday
Careful with the hot tap, cold to burning in a second
Clothes on, stare in the mirror
Aware of the process of life slipping out of the eyes
Deodorize
Mentholated paste on the bristles
Scrub the enamel, now shoelace
Hands like somebody else's
Where are the hands from before?
I was 10 years old once
Life got quiet last night
Station platform
Coffee from the man in the hut with the stutter
I see a friend from school, but we ignore one another
I flick through the papers instead
Aching legs, pounding head
I can't wait for the weekend
I'm staying in bed
In the mouth of a breaking wave
In the mouth of a breaking storm
Shaken, thinking something is coming

The sky's an unusual colour
The weather is doing unusual things
And our leaders aren't even pretending not to be demons
So where is the good heart to go but inwards?
Why not lock all the doors and bolt all the windows?
All I am are my doubts and suspicions
I against you against we against them
This is how it begins
And this is how it will end