

Broken Bones

My first time in a lift. I remember vaguely the assent to the ninth floor. Somewhere stored in me are also the smells - something metallic and the sweetness of cocoa. Even today these scents bring back images of my brother’s leg, held together with screws and plaster. He shared a room with an older boy. When the other boy was discharged they made an arrangement. This is the only other thing I remember.

That evening in his own room somewhere in the city, the boy would turn the light on and off ten times at the stroke of eight. That way they would both know where the other one was.

Do we know how our memory works?

I see the young boy, my brother, lying with his bad leg hoisted up, in darkness. The nurse must have pushed his bed across to the window to give him a better view. And as I see him lying there looking at the city below I hear Goethe’s supposed last words: ‘More light!’.

wallace

It’s the name of every other street, every other pub, every other hostel. I bet there is an undertaker’s somewhere, a hairdresser’s. I tug at my own braids, my sleepsoft hands. The bus is edging past the Tourist Centre at the foot of the monument, keeling with the lean of the hill. Someone in the seat behind me snaps a photograph. “To your left,” the recorded voice says, “is a depiction of William Wallace. It was made by a local stonecutter, inspired, as you may see, by the Gibson film.”

monument

Stepping off the train at an unknown station, the darkness mutes me. A light rain soaks my coat, my hat, my knitted gauntlets. I walk towards a stair, leading up to a bridge where cars drive past. Red, blue, silvery. I don’t know where I am and then I do. There you are, lit up, unmistakable. Your crown of stone filled with an orange glow, your elongated body steaming light. The unfamiliar shapes and sounds around me fall away. I am buoyed up by you, tugged through the rain.

Wanted: Keeper

would suit insomniac
stargazer
amateur astronomer
shift-worker

must be used to working alone
preferably have hobbies
would suit wood-whittler
artist, walker, fisherman

must be able to cook Full English
grow veg, milk goats, paint woodwork
pipe-smoking optional

happy to share space with birds, rats
and other wildlife
good strong arms for hauling boats
rowing, lugging creels

an ability to sleep during the day essential
a love of crosswords or chess an advantage

would suit nature-lover
escapist

would suit loner

drifter

dreamer

Waiting

*‘Eternal Father, strong to save
Whose arm hath bound the restless wave.’*

In the dark safety of the cliff house,
the trinkets on the children’s shelves
are swept with monochrome light.
Outside, wind and sea roar at the walls.

At the window, their mother’s fingers
burn around a cup of living steam,
caught curling upwards in the beam.
Rain bursts against the glass.

The flash of comfort from the stalwart tower
is timed so perfectly she can hear it.

Light.
Light.
Light.

Far below, foaming black water
churns across the bay.
A soft finger of grey light
scans the filthy waves for signs of life.

B L I N D L I G H T

It scans the waves sightlessly.
Tears of rain pour down the window.

*‘Oh hear us when we cry to thee
For those in peril on the sea.’*

awesome, i can’t wait!

one tiny edit on the poem (and the dash should be a long dash,
can’t do it with this stupid email) -

Deep Sea Diver

I do not feel the cold.

Machines
move about me, balletic.

Huge darkness.

Sometimes

a light flashes down.

I stay still.

A string drifts by,

jellyfish -

linked one

onto the other.

Fish trail in their thin strands.

Darkness.

A CARTOGRAPHER’S BREAKDOWN .

The map in front of you was conceived during the construction of a mobile lighthouse. Although the map exists independently, the lighthouse still haunts the texts and occasionally its beam can be seen sweeping through the landscapes they conjure up.

The way in which the lighthouse moves through these pieces can also be felt in what it leaves behind. A world in which lighthouses become mobile is a place where there are no fixed bearings and where everything exists in a state of flux. It is a world where the real and the imagined become indistinguishable, where things are shifting and where everything constantly needs to be reassessed.

It is questionable whether a space can exist in any other way than in relation to the subject. If this is the case we too become part of the flux and not only must we constantly attempt to negotiate our surroundings, one must also continuously try to (re)establish ones shifting identity.

Writing itself is often an attempt or a gesture toward some sort of understanding of the world in which we live and therefore it is apt that these pieces are part of this map sketching the imaginary and the shifting.

The pieces are written by writers from Sweden, Denmark, England, America and Scotland, all currently living and working in Glasgow. One element that shines through from the texts is the way in which a world in flux or a world that is unfamiliar can generate a sense of paralysis. In choosing Glasgow as the place from where to work and English the language in which to write, most of these writers have chosen to embrace the unfamiliar. Nevertheless they all try to work towards some sort of mapping and some sort of understanding, even if only fleeting.

U.H

Neighbourhood Watch

Orkney	Shetland	Iceland	Pittenweem
Start Point	Outer Skerry	Hopsnes	Turning, she saw her father behind her on the sea wall and knew she had to take a photo but didn’t, in that short shutter-click, know why. Holding the result, she saw clearly.
Noup Head	Muckle Skerry	Reykjanes	The scene mostly sky - dark, fulgent - he was barely the size of a pinkie nail. Rather than being diminished by this, he was enhanced. Seeming magnified by being part of something bigger than himself.
Cantick Head	Muckle Flugga	Stafnes	Not that he would like to be thought of that way – wouldn’t see the value of it. But it caught her inside - more than the usual snapshot where a face fills sixty percent of the frame.
Hellar Holm	Muckle Roe	Straumnes	What can you learn about a person unless you can see how the world organises itself around them? The elements around her father were bold and swollen, magnificent and salty; telling her things a close-up of him never could.
Brough of Birsay	Muckle Holm	Holmsberg	
Calf Of Eday	Little Holm	Hornbjarg	
Barrel of Butter	Lunna Holm	Selsker	
Skerry of Ness	Holm of Skaw	Gjögur	
Tor Ness	Esha Ness	Gróttá	
Roseness	Fugla Ness	Engey	
Lother Rock	Suther Ness	Reykjavik	
Hoxa Rock	Symbister Ness	Krossvik	
Papa Stronsay	Ness of Sound	Skagaströnd	
Auskerry	Balta Sound	Skagatá	
Hoy Sound	Uyeasound	Bjargtangar	
Pentland Skerries	Vaila Sound	Svörtuloft	
Swona	Bagi Stack	Krossnes	
Stroma	Hoo Stack	Skardh	
Cava	Mousa	Taska	
Ruff Reef	Brother Isle	Skor	

WALLACE MONUMENT BY GABRIELLA JÖNSSON

PITTENWEEM BY KATE TOUGH

DEEP SEA DIVER BY J.L WILLIAMS

BROKEN BONES BY ULRICH HANSEN

WAITING BY ELINOR CHARLOTTE BROWN

WANTED: KEEPER BY PATRICIA ACE

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH BY KATE TOUGH

