

Quietness is Flammable
David Linklater

In the field, a ribcage of gorse gives way
to a prized heart of light in the shoots,
vessels sewn with pollen. The yellow bulbs,
having shied away, beautify once more.

These tangled monuments do little but revise
their stance and root deeper in the heavy earth
that cooks with mist; a long sigh of relief
between morning and the night.

Somewhere in those great atoms
between the flame and the fingertip
are people going from door to door
looking for anything quiet.

Like the gorse, quietness is flammable.
The mind is an apiary hived with sparks
curling out from nerve roots. It is
sheer weaponry. Solitude's a prescription,

society, a loosely sutured wound
with streets and rivers flowing through.
Here come the caravans, the campervans.
Roads yawn back to life.

Tired things are leaving their houses.
They are coming from the alleys.
There is talk of gatherings in the woods
as redundancies spread like wildfire.

Planes roll towards runways
anxious to saddle on slipstreams.
Borders wait, mouths wide open for sustenance.
The bones light their yellow bulbs again

and the animals rise from their burrows,
from the cottages and the high rises.
Parched ground turns over to a first green blade
and we melt back into something familiar.

The gorse seems louder than usual.
It utters something unpronounceable,
spelling the day anew. We find any window,
any door and go out to try and say it.

David Linklater is a poet from Balintore, Easter Ross. He is the author of two pamphlets: *Ribbons and Rust: Poetry from a Room* and *Black Box*. He was shortlisted for the 2020 Edwin Morgan Award, is the recipient of Dewar Arts Award and holds an MLitt in Creative Writing from the University of Glasgow. His work has appeared in *New Writing Scotland*, *Gutter*, *Glasgow Review of Books*, and *Ink, Sweat & Tears*, amongst others. He lives and writes in Glasgow. Find him on Twitter @DavidRossLinkla