

So Many Words

'There are just so many words that fit on a line'
– Peter Dent, 'Their Forecast Not My Forecast'

I like the ending and then I don't.
A Mexican ghost town crowds in,
detectives in London are on the case,
trying to pin the moments down,
put them into the correct order
so they can solve the problem and
go home. I am scared of the future
and not very keen on the past:
too many variables and unknowns,
so many ways to join the dots
but none of them make sense.

This new music tries to evoke
a past that never existed,
where everything stood still
and we were in control, able to
relax and confide in one another
face to face. Masks are mandatory,
and if we speak at all it is by video
or phone. The museums are empty,
in pubs we sit apart or in the garden;
everyone sleeps in as late as possible
and fails to submit on time.

Deadlines come and go, guitars
shred the minutes and subside.
In a dream I visited all the places
I never saw, probably never will.
A man with a flashlight illuminates
the rules and tells us what to do.
When we were fewer and healthier
there was less to do and the list
of things pending was shorter,
the agenda quickly dealt with
before coffee and cakes arrived.

It is about to end then it doesn't.
Even the small bright lights
have gone out, we are in the dark
and alone, afraid of the now.
I jump before I think, weep later
as it all sinks in. It's our world
and look what we have done.
I am lost in the humming air,
the rain is endless, the last

of my dismantled boat has gone,
collected by a man from Kent.

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