

BULLETINS FROM THE BRINK - a lockdown sequence.



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #1

Out of the fevered darkness, God said:

Imogen, child, we're thinking

of pulling the plug on this earth experiment.

We've learnt a lot but we think it's broken.

But just before we do, with our cosmic fingers
hovering over the switch,

any last suggestions, as to why we shouldn't?



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #2

Hi, God. I've got some bits for you.

First is, love, actually. Both ways round. We're uniquely loveable – your doing - why would you want to waste that?

Others are resigned, jocular – reboot us, let us turn off our own switch, bring it on, whatever.

Then we've got New Zealand, your least-failed experiment. Just chuck the bricks in the middle and build Aotearoa .

Anything compelling?

God says, Well, Imogen, one mark for trying.

Taken in order:

Love and uniqueness, yes, we'll reuse those two, but we're thinking common sense and clear-sight are on balance better. Love is enchanting, but have you noticed pollution? Not to mention patriarchy – can't get rid of it.

Sense of humour – we'll keep that. It might be the starting point. Survival of the drollest.

Aotearoa as blueprint – yes, like that, but didn't you notice, it's a Kiwi who shouted: get on and do it!

Better luck tomorrow.



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #3

- a. Thirteen ways of looking at a blackbird
- b. Time well spent (the project)
- c. Longing for husband
- d. Fear – busy ness- neglect of the soul

God, ideas still coming, but they're strangely alarming. I supposed you are used to that.

Terror and longing – cast into focus by pain you've unleashed on us. I think we are recognising we've all got hard work to do.

But then there's our poetry. You'll never improve on that. That blackbird poem – I challenge you! Go on, do better.

God said:

First and important: Children,

no soul is perishing; we have you all with us. And will do, for ever, post time, post experiment.

We've put too much into this not to treasure the outcome. (The souls – not the mess of it.)

Rest in that knowledge – stay tranquil; we love you.

Get two things clear, daughter. Don't mix your metaphors. And, we didn't unleash this. It's all your own handiwork. We set up the parameters and just let you drive it.

Poetry – yes, now, there, you have us. I doubt our next paradigm will reach that empyrean.

We'll keep that topic open.



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #4

Imogen:

God, I've got one word for you: flowers. Superlative.

God:

Yup. one of our triumphs. Weed in the crevice, beauty-spot blackthorn, crazy Orchidaceae, darling Strelitzia.

Yes, we'll have flowers. But we'll programme out flower shows.



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #5

Seven words for Holy Week

I:

Unthronged, glory and laudless. Palm Sunday silent.

God:

Bethphage, crowd shouting. I was alone there.



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #6

Seven words for Holy Week

I:

..stand on your book stack. You're retreating.

God:

We are behind you, watching and waiting.



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #7

Seven words for Holy Week

I:

The darkness is no darkness with you.

God:

Look hard. See, your pathway to heaven.



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #8

Seven words for Holy Week

I:

Lifetime measured in Passion Plays – curtain falling.

God:

Step out onto our strand, light manifested.



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #9

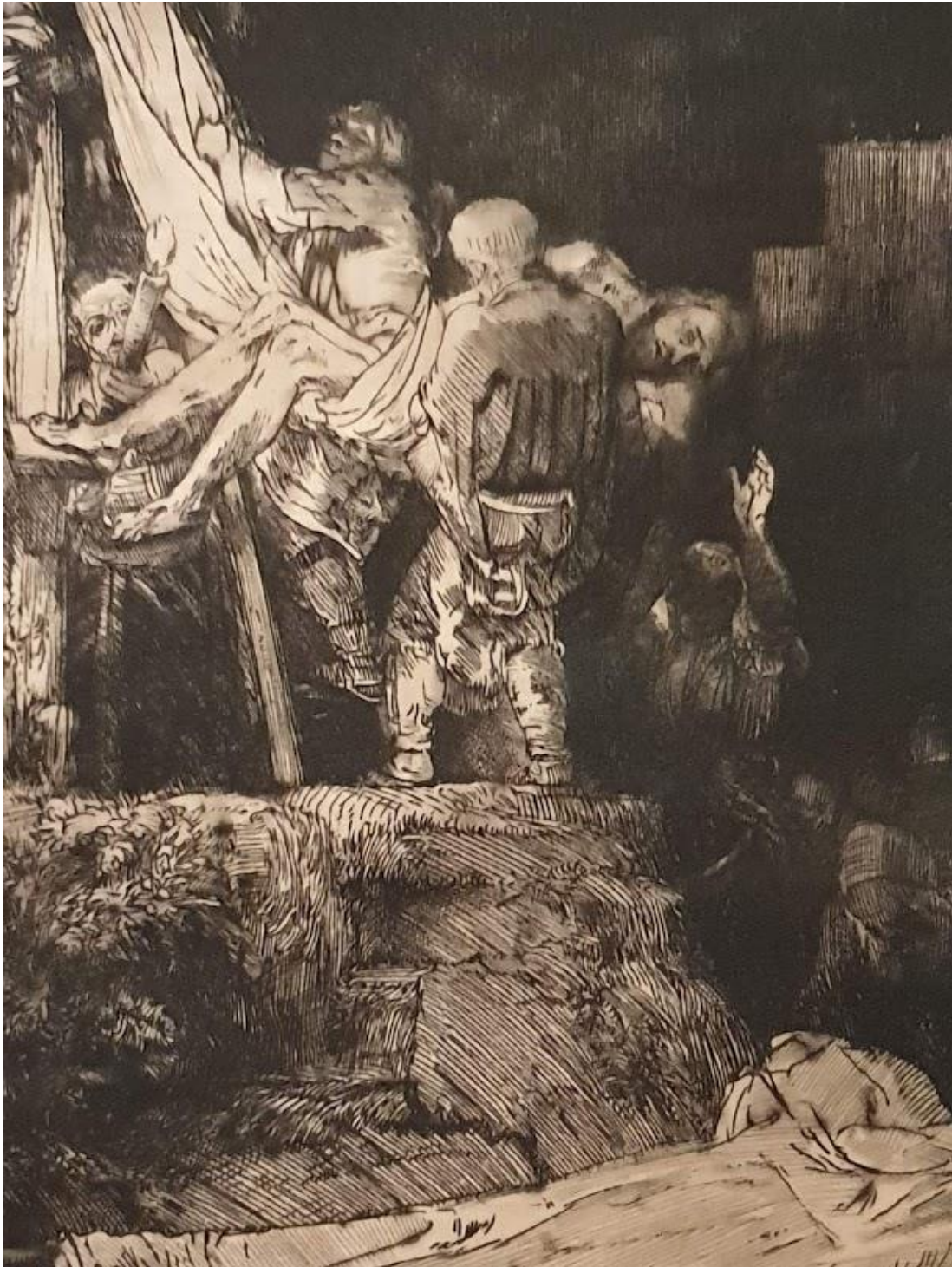
Seven words for Holy Week

I:

Into the sacred cave. Don't forsake us.

God:

Back soon, children. So much to tidy.



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #10

Pietà.

Suffocating darkness.

Stark occlusion.

Divine silence.



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #11

Drowned.

You have him now.

Harrowed.

Home.



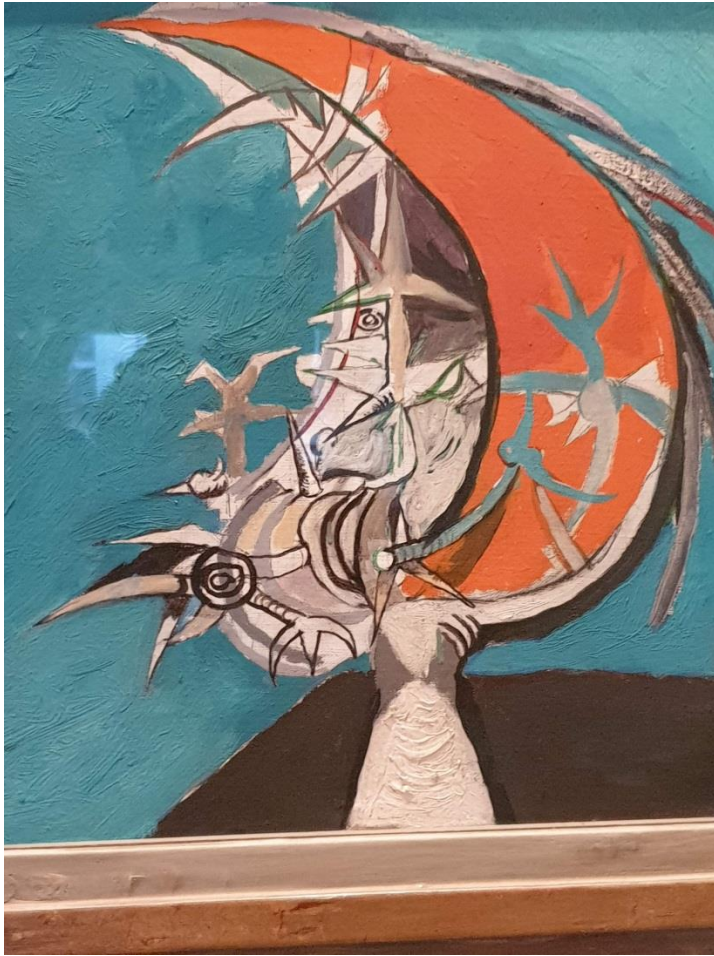
BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #12

For thirty days I have been in the wilderness.

House-bound, couch-bound, breathless, listless.

Now, out, far as eye can see, bluebells' voiceless singing,
birdsong thrilling through silence. Eastering.

God: You want us to keep it then?



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #13

I:

Are we OK now? Bees, beach and bluebells?

God:

Lovely, we grant you. And we're glad you like them.

But we see past them, way back to - cholera.

Cholera: preventable

Pandemics: eight

Death toll: millions

Affected: disposables.

Here, we don't recognise

disposables.



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #14

I:

Deaths stack up. We make them matter.

Nothing is wasted.

God:

You do realise, don't you,

that you are not our first universe?



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #15

I:

What drove you to dispose
of that previous universe?

Were they worse

Than us?

God:

At last count, there were
a trillion stars in Triangulum,
one of two trillion galaxies in your current universe.

Please do the sums. We have been busy.

But nonetheless, against all odds. we love you.



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #16

Stalking the vestiges of night towards dawn's doorway, I
spy a single star brinking the horizon
and perched on the lintel of the day, a bird splinters
the silence with ineffable defiance.

One star, one bird, one pilgrim..



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #17

I:

You went silent on me.

God:

We thought we'd go for a walk, on earth.

We haven't been there since we comforted young Adam. That was a lovely moment of intervention. Don't do that often. ⁱ

We thought: the moors. Ilkley Moor, with or without our headgear.

Then we thought: New Zealand, Canterbury, all those bare hills, sensible people observing the lock down. That'll be empty. We'll have a nice stroll about; look at the earth. Do some evaluating.



We hadn't reckoned on that [Philip Richards](#).

Were you aware of Us?



BULLETINS from the BRINK #18

I:

The hats of God. That's an interesting topic.

I've seen you in kingly crowns and the occasional tiara
and thorns, or course. But on the moor,
would you perhaps be wearing the beanie?

God:

The beanie was inspired. Nobody thinks
we're going to show up
wearing a beanie. Reminiscent of that fine poem

by R.A.K Mason ⁱⁱ

[1](#)



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #19

Brightness falls from the air.

Nurses die, young and fair.

Dust has closed Mary's eye.

They are sick, they must die.

Lord, have mercy on us.

God:

They are sick, they need not die

Mind, science, grind, yours to apply.



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #20

The painted rainbow in the neighbour's window
fades sepia, as our outset joy in leisure and clear skies
drains stuttering away. When will this end?

God:

You found a rainbow in a shaded space. Endure.



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #21

I:

Hurtled from sleep into a waking thirst,
raging, undocumented in the corvid-symptom tracker,
I see a path which I am bound to follow
by some inexorable word, which fades
as I awake. But still it lingers. Lord,
your way is barren and your meaning dark.

God does not answer.



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #22

Here I am laid on
my febrile bed
and blood red
a wraith maiden
made of
twisted sinews
from corvid curlicues
gives me a message.
Screaming,
I cannot hear it.

God: Here is something beautiful look at while you work it out.



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #23

Gorgeous words from saint Francis the next.

Vainglorious images of George the original.

Me, if I need a male in mail

Defeating the dragon (read corvid)

I turn to Michael, who has handy companions.

Send Thy archangel, Michael, to our succour;
Peacemaker blessèd, may he banish from us
Striving and hatred, so that for the peaceful
All things may prosper.

And most apt for our ravaged times:

Send thy archangel, Raphael, the restorer
Of the misguided ways of men who wander,
Who at Thy bidding strengthens soul and body
With Thine anointing.

May Michael defend us and Raphael restore us – at least let us believe in angels.

God: It seems that most of you do.



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #24

At four am, the waking dream declared:

“You’re at a crossroads, placed
precisely between there and there.

Where you go next is key.”

It gave no indication of the trace

that brought me thence or lay

before me. The path was bare,

dried ruts in ancient clay.

No sign to indicate a forward way.

A solitary cactus, in an arid space, becomes a paradise.

No answer is the answer.



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #25

I that in health was, and gladness,
am troubled now with great sickness,
and feebled with infirmity.

Timor mortis conturbat me.

Our pleasance here is all vainglory;
this false world is but transitory.

The flesh is brittle, our opponent sly.

Timor mortis conturbat me.

The state of man does change and vary.

Now sound, now sick, now blithe, now sorry,
now dancing merry, now like to die.

Timor mortis conturbat me.



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #26

GOD:

God sat in garden, wearing hat.

“It’s just as well,” They said, “we don’t provide
aircraft controllers for the birds.

Imagine the complexity of that,
as if quad trillion stars were not enough
for any maker. Shaper of words,
what have you got for us tonight?

IMOGEN:

I have a *chicken*, God. Show me Thy laws!

“They knew You in the breaking of the bread”

and here’s a luscious chicken, centre stage
in your most loved Emmaus. Little claws
crunched up in adoration, and the bread?

that little offering, less loaf than turd,
tucked in a corner. Ah! dough ensures the bird
rising from certain death thus death denies.

the untamed resurrecter of the skies.



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #27

I:

Was that too obscure?

They didn't get it.

I thought it one of my better efforts.

God:

We liked it, but there were several threads.

not quite quad trillion, but for humans,

three is too many. Perhaps too dark?

What about something

mildly amusing?



BULLETIN FROM THE BRINK #28

Oh you were clustered eighteen, sweet sunlight,
oh you were young, jaunty and blithe,
laughing and joshing, keen to see the sight,
vibrant and careless, owning only life.

On the 28th of April in the year of 95.

Oh as you plunged to rock-sharp death,
oh tragic innocents, what did you cry?
Had you the time to draw a final breath,

to form a thought preparatory to die?

On the 28th of April in the year of 95.

Oh twenty-five's not long enough to mourn,

oh, fourteen lives cut off, four spared, condemned

to wear the after-pain, scarce to be borne.

God are too busy; They could not attend

On the 28th of April in the year of 95.



BULLETINS from the BRINK #29

Aloft on Erebus, over Cave Creek, under Pike River,

We hover, brood, yearning to interfere,

inside the Linwood Mosque, by every covid bed,
though aching to deliver.

but oh so rarely dare.

Imagine, daughter, if We did

keep pumping in the drug.

They'd never stop inventing deaths until

we pulled the plug.

Notes & comments

Original introduction on Facebook:

Here's a thing I'm doing. This is day 15 of my lock down, but it's actually day #1 of a new thing.

Every day I will publish a bulletin. It will be composed of ideas drawn from comments you have made on the previous day's bulletin.

Rules:

1. Whatever you comment will find its way into the next bulletin in some way. All comments will be read and absorbed, but I'm the only one sending the bulletin to God.
2. No rainbows or soap. Only moments, visions, ideas, jokes, perceptions - actual reasons God might consider (see the bulletin proper). You do not need to believe in God.
3. No personal attacks (obvs)
4. Only 1 comment each per day please. No replies. There will be time tomorrow.

A selection of comments:



BULLETINS from the BRINK - a new idea.

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Rules: ... See more

Jonn Nicholson, Janet Gras and 4 others 11 comments

Like Comment Share

Ruth Chignell-Stapleton Because there are so many amazing individuals, whose love and kindness would be lost. The world is not broken at all. The present crisis brings the world closer and allows it to adapt to the new and unexpected. As after any period of illness, the world will come out stronger!! 😊

Like · Reply · 1d

Christine Fry Please, God, give us one more chance. We're only just beginning to learn that we might be able to mend the brokenness with kindness.

Like · Reply · 1d

Trevor D Oakes Sorry God, tradition here has it that it's the last one to leave who turns the lights off

Like · Reply · 1d 1

Sara Kironde-Strain You have made your point God. You ARE in charge. Can we please REBOOT...

Like · Reply · 1d

Dale Tapper Not all of the countries on Earth are surrounded by darkness and despair. Thanks to the decisive actions of our government we New Zealanders feel strong and ready to beat this thing which after all is just a virus.

Like · Reply · 1d

April ▾

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Esther Wane Because you love us...

Like · Reply · 1d



Alistair Kinniburgh Yes Please God, we've been waiting for generations, each one believing that you would pull the pin in their time, It sounds as though you have enough mansions in your house now. Thanks in advance for your REVELATIONS

Like · Reply · 1d



Jonn Nicholson Here am I, Lord. Your will be done.

Like · Reply · 1d



Helen Riddle Because from this global fear there will be, one by one, each day be an increase in the realisation that we need to change to make this a better place where we can all live, and grow. That selfishness is not the answer. We are learning.

Like · Reply · 13h



Phyl Aver Swindlehurst Because there is always HOPE.

Like · Reply · 13h



Angie Hurricks because I miss my husband 😞 ...

Like · Reply · 6h



Write a comment...



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Imogen, child, we're thinking
of pulling the plug on this earth experiment.
We've learnt a lot but we think it's broken.
But just before we do, with our cosmic fingers
hovering over the switch,
any last suggestions, as to why we shouldn't?

Jeremy Harding, Sandy Walkington and 4 others

3 comments

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Cressida Harding Here are 13 reasons.
<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/.../thirteen-ways-of-...>



POETRYFOUNDATION.ORG
**Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird
by... | Poetry Foundation**

Like · Reply · 14h



Ronnie Smith Time well-spent Immy!

Like · Reply · 13h



Stella J Kinniburgh Petrified

Ridden with anxiety having traveled this far though life at this age of 76
don't want to be swallowed up in some dam virus.
Good thing is time but even with more time where does my time go ?
Mostly checking up on others.
Family neighbor parish.
Attending to the soul
should come first
All challenging .

Like · Reply · 13h · Edited



Write a comment...



Imogen de la Bere

1 April at 15:14 · ▾



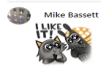
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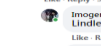


Like · Reply · 35 w



O dear today is the 25th anniversary of Cave Creek.

Like · Reply · 35 w



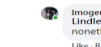
Lindley Turnbull oh no! How grim and unfortunate.

Like · Reply · 35 w



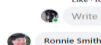
Despite the terrible lunch that was such a happy day.

Like · Reply · 35 w



Lindley Turnbull poor Stephen missing his steak! But yes so happy
nonetheless.

Like · Reply · 35 w



Glad to hear you're on the mend, Imogen. Love and Prayers from Christchurch!

Like · Reply · 35 w



So ID is a knife edge. Life can go either way...

Like · Reply · 35 w



Write a comment...



25



Notes to #17

Rev

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Yo-UYCoZ9o>

Supreme Being

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XOzHoJYKMtM>

One thing I can't stand, it's mess. I want all this stuff picked up.

....

SB: Now I want every bit of Evil...placed in here.- Right away.-

TB: Of course, sir. Come on.

TB: You mean you let all those people die, just to test your creation ?

SB: Yes. You really are a clever boy.

TB: Why did they have to die ? You might as well say, "Why do we have to have evil ?"

Oh, we wouldn't dream of asking a question like that, sir.

TB: Yes. Why do we have to have evil ?

SB: Ah.- I think it's something to do with freewill

Bethany: Why are we here?

God: Nwerp

ⁱ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8GyFZyL1D_Q

ⁱⁱ <https://sites.google.com/site/selectedpoemsrakmason/home/on-the-swap/Christ%20on%20the%20Swag.jpg>