

JANET GALBRAITH
Sami–Stavenger, Norway, 2017

Fists of the World

Written when accompanying Ali Dorani to safety in Norway

1.

The harbour that holds the boats
is my point of reference
from where I can find a way home
In the stone cobbled streets
I get lost turn right down a street
that leads me further away onto another that
turns around another
and though their beauty is gentle

warm lights caressing mists

soft rains

you are not here

and in this quiet I feel

the fists of the world.

2.

The fists of the world

land against the lancet that I hold out front

it bends but no longer bounces back.

When the boats leave

I will lose sight of the harbour

and find myself alone

walking the maze.

3.

Walking the maze

of suspicion and thoughtlessness

I fail to remember that orange leads to blue

in vast skies

where not all has been shut in

where tides follow a different rhythm

and the gift of a moss ridden earth

is to welcome the smallest of sighs.

4.

The smallest of sighs whispers

grasses growing from black rocks

along black watered fjords

where fluorescent lichens

pattern crevices

and tickle well worn patterns

beneath my feet.

5.

Beneath my feet

songs are silent

my hearing is attuned to another

and I have not had time

not lived the slow repeated tread

not known the oft repeated visit

of sun and wind

rain and snow here

but I have known the words of another

and these call me to listen deeper

until a quiet stillness washes the leafless forest

and the fists of this world give way

for a moment

to stone and moss

pine, birch and seagulls overhead.