

## Sock and Buskin

Louise Devlin

If I don't sneeze near your face  
I'll help save the human race  
From this impending, dooms-day gloom.

Like a comedy of errors,  
We are all in this together  
Our masks the dramatic umbrellas,

Used to cover  
Our mistaken identity scorn.  
If I don't see you smile,

I'll pretend it will be for a short while,  
Whilst reading addictively  
Alternative news on the world wide web.

With my tinfoil hat,  
Used to talk with UFOs,  
I'll strip off my second face

Nakedly and shamefully  
Be 2-faced,  
Exposing my true feelings for you.

Telling my alien pals.  
How you disappeared for a while  
Locked away for months in isolation.

How you got really peeved off,  
If you heard anyone outside on your street  
To dare publicly cough,

And how it was impossible  
To buy loo paper, dumbbells  
Or a bike online.

You used cans of baked beans instead  
To exercise and sort out your head,  
So f\*\*\*\*\*g glad, you were not dead.

Lifting up 415 grams on each glute,  
How you clenched yourself  
Tight. It felt good!

With no totem mask in sight,  
Breathing in your homely  
Air-freshener rights.

'Keep your distance'  
(Actually, I needed the space)

'Pass others quickly'  
(I won't now have to see your stressed-out-face)

'Look away when passing other people'  
(That's OK I was passing the creeps anyway)

'Be alert'  
(Didn't realise I had been asleep when awake)

'Your DNA will be your data'  
The train station advert said overhead -  
'But the future is full of opportunity'

Well that's OK then,  
Just take my innocent finger prints,

I'll be led.

To the government paid restaurants  
Where waiting staff are wearing face shields  
Their breath hit by fantastic plastic.

I sit and patiently wait.

Watching how some preferred  
To be outside disguised with masks  
Rather than inside revealing

Human emotions.  
Forgetful forks  
Killing knives,

Grind and cut  
Through all the strife.  
Food the catalyst,

For new digestible dreams.  
One where a world is normal,  
Straightforward,

Not a virus dominated  
Never-ending  
Silent scream.

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