

# The Day the World Stopped Turning

The day the world stopped turning,  
a different sort of silence descended from the skies.  
No one bothered to watch the telly  
although the event was covered live.  
In some ways it was an ordinary day, just like any other,  
except traffic wardens were joyriding  
and no one gave a toss about the property ladder.

And as we waited for death  
without a word of protest,  
the London and New York stock exchanges  
became temples of tranquillity.  
Suicide rates were remarkably low  
but very few pubs were empty.  
People started smoking again  
and forgot about their diets.  
Vegetarians pigged out on bacon  
and Cliff Richard popped his cherry.

No one manned the call centres,  
except a couple of under managers.  
Meteorologists forecast a long dark winter  
and there was no morning rush hour.

No technology was upgraded  
and no one went to war.  
People shared their innermost secrets,  
but no one gossiped anymore;  
and although we collectively lost our pride,  
many found a vestige of self respect.  
No language in the world could do it justice,  
although Ant and Dec did their best;  
and we searched for that balance between spirituality and sin,  
while Piers Morgan found a way to make it all about him.

The arse dropped out of organised crime  
and the prisons opened early,  
and while yuppies locked themselves indoors  
and took solace from Paul McCartney,  
everyone went on TikTok and left eulogies to each other,  
while Vladimir Putin sat alone in his office

and thought about his mother.

The gun lobby felt powerless,  
but survivalists were delighted.  
People with dementia forgot they were going to die  
and had to be constantly reminded.

The paparazzi deserted celebrities  
and left them feeling lonely.  
Politicians everywhere admitted they were lying  
and then went home to spend time with their families.

The UN found itself helpless again,  
but neighbours became friends,  
and the advertising industry was racking its brains  
right until the very end,  
but nothing was for sale,  
because nothing was worth buying  
and you can't put spin  
on a world that isn't turning.

Everyone's debts were cancelled  
and lifestyle became redundant;  
sceptics prayed frantically to save their souls,  
and the tabloids became indignant,  
and launched a last-minute campaign  
to find someone to blame;  
whilst trying not to feel upset  
about a blue green planet swollen with regret,  
people flocked to film one last sunset,  
but the sunset never came.

No one had any illusion of redemption or survival,  
and for all the talk of sexual abandon,  
all most folk wanted was one last cuddle.

Long lost lovers were reunited  
but became distracted in their thinking,  
and God breathed a tremendous sigh of relief  
on the day the world stopped turning.

And when it came,  
it was like a warm breeze blowing through knackered old bones

that swallowed your soul.

The sky came down and the sun shone brighter  
as we took a deep breath and slid back beneath the water.

In a way it felt like a privilege to be there at the end  
and maybe one day we'll do it all over again;  
but if anyone ever hears about this,  
they might benefit from learning  
that we lived our lives more than ever before  
on the day the world stopped turning.

By Rob Gee