

2020 Vision – Déjà vu?

I sense I have been here before – but when?

Go back, back to the dawn of memory.
Walking, but pram-bound on wet afternoons,
Popper by popper, inch by inch, my small
universe shrank and vanished from my gaze.
Fat raindrops splodged and slithered down the screen
before me. Dry and safe, but ill at ease
I rode in muggy, twilit solitude.

Or, child and adult, friendless in strange towns,
constrained by lack of independent means.
To shield me from despair or apathy
Imagination fashioned barricades
from half-forgotten skills and salvaged dreams.

But most of all, those first elastic days
of a new life entrusted to my care.
Night and day lost identity, and time,
subject to neither calendar nor clock
was measured only by the basic need
to sleep, feed, comfort, wonder and adore.

Years passed. Another occupied the pram.
School and employment nourished and inspired.
The baby settled into his routine.
Reluctant hermit or willing recluse -
Each isolation armed me for the next.

We have been here before – and will again.
But this I know, here is no cul-de-sac,
nor yet the highway to some promised land.
To journey on we need to build a road -
be it through forest, desert, mountain, swamp -
with neither route nor destination known.
Working together we can surely reach
a place where we can put down roots and thrive.

Then let us keep this road in good repair
so that when next we pass this way, we say,
‘We have been here before, but all is well,
for, see, there is the way that leads to home!’

Jill Elliott May 2020