



Ordinary Things: A Reflection on Race and Capital in the Pandemic

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Abstract:

In response to the race-based, capitalist logics further exposed during the pandemic, I engage in poetic inquiry by weaving the words of Arundhati Roy in a multimodal *Vox Justitia*. I begin with brief rationale for the inquiry, noting that the pandemic has sharpened the harms of racism and capitalism, and has exposed the fragility of contemporary democracy. I then describe why poetic inquiring in general, and a *Vox Justitia* in particular, engaged through the writing of Arundhati Roy, offer a useful way to grapple with this moment. Finally, I proceed through the five movements of my *Vox Justitia*, employing images, news headlines, and excerpts from Roy's writing, to contextualize my poetic analysis.

Keywords: poetic inquiring; pandemic; capitalism; race

Les petites choses quotidiennes : Une réflexion sur la race et le capital durant la pandémie

Résumé :

En réponse aux logiques racistes et capitalistes mises en évidence par la pandémie, je m'engage dans une enquête poétique en tissant les mots d'Arundhati Roy dans un *Vox Justitia* multimodal. Je commence par une brève justification de l'enquête, en notant que la pandémie a accentué les méfaits du racisme et du capitalisme, et a exposé la fragilité de la démocratie contemporaine. Je décris ensuite pourquoi l'enquête poétique en général, et un *Vox Justitia* en particulier, engagée à travers l'écriture d'Arundhati Roy, offrent un moyen utile de faire face à ce moment. Enfin, je procède aux cinq mouvements de mon *Vox Justitia*, en utilisant des images, des titres de journaux, et des extraits de l'écriture de Roy, pour contextualiser cette analyse poétique.

Mots clés : enquête poétique; pandémie; capitalisme; race

In response to the constrictions of the pandemic, I examine the intersection of race and capital—the hard edges of hatred and impossible fetters of profit—by breathing with the works of Arundhati Roy. Roy, a writer of fiction and non-fiction, weaves stories of pain and exclusion, enlivened by rage and hope. Her writing confronts what it means to inhabit a Brown body, what it means to be a woman, what it means to live in a “poor-rich” nation, and what it means to write as an act of rebellion in a collapsing world. This piece proposes to raise her words through a form of poetic inquiring known as *Vox Justitia* (Prendergast, 2009, 2015). This multimodal, five-movement *Vox Justitia* juxtaposes her writing with images and news headlines from the last two years—a time of exceptional hardship across the world, but particularly for bodies dually implicated by racist and capitalist logics. The motif of breathing is used for its significance to the COVID pandemic and to illustrate the direness of the pressure on racialized bodies. This paper hopes to critically explore the texture of oppression where capital meets race, but also to uncover—to give spirit to—the affective dimensions of pain, sadness, guilt and grief that are inevitably attendant. I begin with an overview of our current pandemic moment and proceed to detail the rationale for mobilizing the writing of Arundhati Roy, through the lens of poetic inquiry, as a way of grappling with the pressures—embodied, extrinsic and inescapable—of this time. In the first four movements of my poetic inquiry, I explore that pressure, that pushing-down and difficult-to-breathe sense of weight that constricts breath, that *pression*, through analysis of *expression*, *oppression*, *repression* and *depression*. I close, in the last movement, with a hope for recovery, for a reprieve of lightness, for the breath of *esprit*.

This Moment

In this time of pandemic, I have started to accept the weariness in my bones. I repeat some kind of marrow mantra: *just one more day*. But the onslaught of racist and exclusionary events, seemingly tangential, yet also inextricably bound to the pandemic, are pressing vulnerable bodies into despair. What has perhaps been most disheartening to me, as a scholar of responsible and ethical education, is the naked contempt that has displaced compassion in our social contracts. Perhaps we are reaping what we have sown across decades of capitalism that commodifies, dehumanizes, individualizes, and affirms only the drive to accumulate (Bustamente et al., 2019; Roshanravan, 2014). COVID-19 has brought the citizens of already polarized countries into open conflict as responses to the pandemic take on the divided nature of political and economic ideologies (Druckman et al., 2021). To be sure, none of these problems are new. Many have been overtly tended by those in power who obscure their greed by stoking hatred: patriotism as a euphemism for White supremacy (Peters, 2020); the vilification of “others”—any others—who represent a threat to personal opportunities for wealth or economic success (Fuchs, 2020; Paul, 2020); and an ongoing disregard for those who are slipping under the grinding wheel of poverty, as labour is increasingly and frantically exchanged for diminishing returns (Robinson, 2020). Citizens concerned with equity and those invested in preserving democracy have watched with dismay as traditions and institutions fall without any meaningful response from politicians (Levitsky & Ziblatt, 2018). Social media has proven itself to be a conduit for some of humanity’s worst impulses, as

misinformation, disinformation and hate speech cultivate entire communities of radicalized intent (Author, 2021; Bastug et al., 2020; Koehler, 2014).

The hardships of inequality and the despondency that progressive agendas are losing ground against regressive policies have shaped a need for writers, scholars and activists to levy their respective tools in response. For this reason, this paper seeks not only to examine the intersection of race and capital, but also to breathe through the works of a writer—Arundhati Roy—whose activist voice has deliberated these issues for more than two decades. Roy is an Indian woman who is, perhaps, most celebrated for her novel *The God of Small Things*, published in 1997. Since then, however, she has turned her critical eye and lyrical prose to political work that includes essays, interviews and fiction. Roy has written and spoken out in protest of nuclear weapons (Roy, 2016), against fascism and capitalism (Roy, 2003, 2014, 2016, 2020), and for democracy (Roy, 2003, 2008; Roy & Cusack, 2016). After being lauded in India’s National Pride Parade for *The God of Small Things* (Roy, 1997), her subsequent work, critical of the Indian government, has made her a target. Writing of the delicate courage required of a political activist-author, a brown-skinned woman living in the country she critiques, Roy (2016) notes:

When I told my friends that I was writing this piece, they cautioned me, “Go ahead,” they said, “but first make sure you’re not vulnerable. Make sure your papers are in order. Make sure your taxes are paid.”

My papers are in order. My taxes are paid. But how can one *not* be vulnerable in a climate like this? Everyone is vulnerable. Accidents happen. There’s safety only in acquiescence. As I write I am filled with foreboding. (p. 54)

As she writes, she is filled with foreboding and, perhaps, something else, too: an unquenched need to respond, a kindling of responsibility and a low-burning spark of rage. These are the humble drivers of work that endeavours to shine a light on the seemingly insurmountable, the systemic, the oppressive.

Lastly, it is important to note that Roy writes of and in India, while I am a racialized academic and member of the Indian diaspora in North America. The context of her impetus is, therefore, different than my own. Despite these differences in geography and perspective, however, there are parallels between the embodiment of Brownness, the scope of exploitation, the expectation of poverty accepted, of demurral and—of course—of those twin heads of a single monster, capitalism and White supremacy. In this inquiry, the goal is not to efface the Indian context that is central to Roy’s work or to invoke her particular political positions on issues, but to illuminate the ways in which oppression produces similar traumas across the world. The objective is also to hold up a mirror to “rich-poor” nations that are often comfortably assured of their place in the “first world”. These countries, though denoted as first world by virtue of their political stability and economic growth, are not bastions of perfect democracy and ubiquitous wealth for all. As Roy (in Goodman, 2003) notes, “democracy has become Empire’s euphemism for neo-liberal capitalism” (13th paragraph of Arundhati Roy transcript), and as the latest data shows, wealth is increasingly concentrated in the hands of the rich (Oxfam, 2019).

Poetic Inquiring

Words are enormous: they are whole worlds into which I might disappear at any moment; “little events” and “ordinary things” (Roy, 1997, p. 32) are, for me, unmanageable outside of the possibilities of poetry. In other words, the only way I make sense, in these days of capitalist plagues, is to smash and reconstitute, to build the bones of a story that brings, in upheld palms, attention to unrepresented voices. Like Faulkner (2018), I employ poetic inquiry to “marry social science and poetry”, “demonstrate embodiment”, “critique traditional representations of marginalized and stigmatized identities” and “effect social change” (p. 210). I further see poetic inquiry as the most fitting methodological response to capitalism and White supremacy as it assails the tenets that firmly hold status quo in place, in particular, the emphasis on the quantifiable, the hegemonic, the standardizable as measured against an untroubled norm. In her work on the influence of Maxine Greene, Gulla (2018) notes that “education has been commodified” (p. 110) and that “schools, like most bureaucracies, prefer the measurable and the predictable” (p. 110). Greene centres this concern as early as 1984, writing,

This is a moment in our history when persons are described as “resources,” when changes in education are being called for in the name of economic productivity and national defense. The values of process and choicemaking are being repressed or set aside. Human energies are to be channelled and controlled in the “national interest”; no longer is there talk of what is not yet, of imagined possibility. Along with this comes a sense of petrification. (p. 123)

A sense of capitalist intrusion is now pervasive. There is no respite from the drive to accumulate that begins in schools and is fed throughout our lives as labourers. A response to this onslaught has to make itself felt (Parker, 2021). Greene (1984) offers one such response:

To recognize that an encounter with a work of art can open windows in the presumably actual or the pre-defined, windows that open outwards to alternative visions of the world, is to break with the sense that reality is petrified. (p. 125)

Greene (2001) suggests there is value in encouraging people to “see more” and “listen more” (pp. 51-52). I find resonance between Greene’s advocacy for art as rupture and the rich language Arundhati Roy uses throughout her work. I also recognize, in Greene, similarities with Roy’s ongoing project of speaking back to capitalism, of resistance to petrification and of the hope of imagination, through the rebellion of writing.

This work mines Roy’s works of fiction, essays and interviews through the last two decades, seeking both the fury and the hope that shine a light on the current circumstances of racialized bodies, suspended against time, unchangeable, by capitalist and White supremacist logics. Prendergast (2009) notes that “sifting through data . . . is the process of intuitively sorting out words, phrases, sentences, passages that synthesize meaning from prose” and that “the researcher’s own affective response to the process informs it” (p. xxiii).

Here, I use the metaphor of breathing to characterize my engagement with Roy’s work. I choose breathing with intention: firstly, because the pandemic has forced us to confront the taken-for-grantedness of breath, with a virus that leeches oxygen from our bodies and leaves us gasping

for air; secondly, in response to a year of terrible violence against racialized bodies—not only police violence that extinguishes life and breath, but also the greater susceptibility of racialized bodies to illness as they are exploited in a capitalist system. The breathing motif is a form of recapturing a slow, deep breath; it is an act of resistance. In reviewing Roy's canon, I seek passages that are liberated from the strictures of academic writing, from the often cold, affectless rhetoric of analysis, from dispassionate considerations of the dire. I find language that is animated by evocative phrasing, poetic plays and textured text. I then organize her words suspended against images, headlines and media commentary from North America. The latter are selected, in keeping with the breathing thematic, for their gut-punch-like ability to arrest breath. These texts are then combined in my own poetic analysis, a *Vox Justitia*. The *Vox Justitia* is one of several ways of characterizing a poem's voice, as initially delineated by Prendergast (2009; 2015). The *Vox Justitia* is appropriate here as it foregrounds a voice of justice and is written toward equality and freedom (Prendergast, 2009, 2015). I employ *Vox Justitia* to make visible and sensible the tensions, hardships and inequities that press our societies' vulnerable into the claustrophobic margins. I do it to foreground what women, and especially Brown women, often characterized as subservient, are taught to deny: the animating *esprit* of rage and all its attendant possibilities.

Pression

The French word "*pression*" is suggestive of the sentiment precisely located at the nexus of race and capital. It is "*force qui écrase, qui pousse*" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2021)—a force that crushes, squashes, pushes. It is nested into oppression, repression and depression, as it is with expression—being pressed out—as from a homeland. It is the tight grip of being seen, arrested in a Brown, Black or otherwise racialized body, in relation to one's skin and in proximity to Whiteness. It is the panic-imbued clamouring for the next rung on the capitalist lie of social mobility. The term "*pression*" operationalizes the first four movements of this *Vox Justitia*, as Roy's writing is held in tension with images, headlines and news excerpts from the pandemic year of 2021 to explore the uniquely painful accounting of bodies that are deemed less.

Expression



"In the Home of a Group of Florida Migrants just Arrived at Onley, Virginia"
Photograph by J. Delano, 1940. Library of Congress (public domain). Retrieved from <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017791215/>

For the people who've been resettled, everything has to be re-learned. Every little thing, every big thing: from shitting and pissing (where d'you do it when there's no jungle to hide you?) to buying a bus ticket, to learning a new language, to understanding money. And worst of all, learning to be supplicants—learning to take orders—learning to have Masters—learning to answer only when they're addressed. From being self-sufficient and free, to being further impoverished and yoked to the whims of a world you know nothing, nothing about—what d'you suppose it must feel like? (Roy, 1999, p. 9)

The Guardian—

Georgia's governor signed 'Jim Crow' voting bill under painting of a slave plantation

(Wicker, 2021, March 27)

Most of us know the story, but given the amnesia that is being pressed upon us, it might serve to put down a chronology of the recent present. (Roy, 2016, p. 6)

The Guardian—

'They can see us in the dark': migrants grapple with hi-tech fortress EU:

A powerful battery of drones, thermal cameras and heartbeat detectors are being deployed to exclude asylum seekers

(Popoviciu, 2021, March 26)

Race and Capital in the Pandemic

The tragedy is immediate, real, epic and unfolding before our eyes. But it isn't new. It is the wreckage of a train that has been careening down the track for years. (Roy, 2020, para. 8)

In my land

Some of these brown bodies arrived with hope.

Others with a shackling huntedness.

Leather shoes, luggage

A setting down sense

Breathing for a moment the new air and a silver shaft of sun.

Everything has to be relearnt:

The texture of this street and the curve of bus lines

A winter cold that turns fingers blue

Weeks without sun

The impossible currency of local experience

The new music of old words, now discordant in a crowd

The bumping along sense of memory

Those left behind

But mostly

The value of skin.

And what of the left behind?

Streets decolonizing and recolonizing

Grandmothers curling against loss

An absence that curdles love and strains nostalgia

The costs will be tallied later:

Of days lost to despair

Of the infidelity of home, shifting at a distance

Impossible to remember this house, those neighbours.

Of the word family

A stone polished smooth with worry and remembering.

Everything must be relearnt

But

There is always

The Dream: work hard

Try, give, bend, save,

Do your part

And then, and then.

The next generation will rise like a tide

Like a cluster of golden balloons to a limitless horizon.

Oppression



“Stranded Migrant Workers During Fourth Phase of the Lockdown”
Photograph by T. Liu, 2009. Licensed under CC BY-BD 2.0. Retrieved from
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stranded_migrant_workers_during_fourth_phase_of_the_lockdown_IMG_20200523_125500.jpg

Pew Research Center—

**The Pandemic Stalls Growth in the Global Middle Class, Pushes Poverty Up Sharply:
Advanced economies also see a decrease in living standards**

(Kochhar, 2021, March 18)

“It’s perplexing that there’s such an asymmetry of response related to these men and women of colour,” [Dr. Shanker Nesathuraiin] said. (Leavitt, 2021, para. 5)

Our towns and megacities began to extrude their working-class citizens—their migrant citizens—like so much unwanted accrual. (Roy, 2020, para. 24)

The Guardian—

Google founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin join \$100bn club

(Neate, 2021, April 12)

The Guardian—

The latest must-have among US billionaires? A plan to end the climate crisis:

Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos and Bill Gates have an estimated wealth of \$466bn—and are emblematic of a Davos-centric worldview that sees free markets and tech as the answer

(Milman & Rushe, 2021, March 2)

Because Big Dams are monuments to corruption—to international corruption on an inconceivable scale—bankers, politicians, bureaucrats, environmental consultants, aid agencies—they're all involved in the racket. The people that they prey on are the poorest, most marginalized sections of the populations of the poorest countries in the world. They don't count as people. Therefore the costs of Big Dams don't count as costs. They're not even entered in the books. (Roy, 1999, p. 4)

In my land we build

Pipelines and walls

the flow of oil and people

what we desire and what must be kept away

what we value on display for the world.

Bodies are small next to such monuments and they cannot be counted as much.

There is simply no room here for you unless

unless

"you are one of the good ones"

who will bend from the waist,

hands in the clay,

and pull from the earth an endless service to our golden-mantled god,

economy.

He sits astride our necks and we must be grateful that—

though he could, oh, he could at any moment—

he does not eat us whole.

Repression



“No One is Illegal! May Day of Action”

Photograph by T. Liu, 2009. Licensed under CC BY-ND 2.0.

Retrieved from <https://www.flickr.com/photos/75511860@N00/3495633291/in/photostream/>

The security camera video was shocking in its brutality. A 65-year-old Filipino immigrant was walking down a street near Times Square when a man, in broad daylight, suddenly kicked her in the stomach. She crumpled to the sidewalk. He kicked her once in the head. Then again. And again. He yelled an obscenity at her, according to a police official, and then said, “You don’t belong here.” (Hong et al., 2021, paras. 1-2)

Why does it all seem so familiar? Is it because, even as you watch, reality dissolves and seamlessly rushes forward into the silent, black-and-white images from old films—scenes of people being hounded out of their lives, rounded up and herded into camps? Of massacre, of mayhem, of endless columns of broken people making their way to nowhere? (Roy, 2016, pp. 53-54)

Globe and Mail—

If you’re a racialized woman, everything you’ve heard about salary negotiation is wrong

(Kong, 2021, April 5)

The Toronto Star—

Nanny state? Hardly.

Canada has left its foreign caregivers in a stalled system that’s derailing lives, critics say

(Keung, 2021, March 27)

The Toronto Star—

**Our elders, women are being attacked and killed.
To #StopAsianHate, we must work together to dismantle white supremacy**

(Lin & Shao, 2021, April 08)

From time to time we could lift our eyes from the page and acknowledge the condition of the world around us. Acknowledge the price that someone, somewhere far away is paying, in order for us to switch our lights on, cool our rooms and run our baths. (Roy, 1999, p. 12)

In my land

Of massacre and mayhem

Nothing changes.

There are as many brown bent backs

Hillocks and furrows

Carrying apples and babies

Holding hands of seniors beached against the shore of care

Nursing bodies pressed between starched sheets and tablets

We are stuck in an endless loop of the familiar

Scenes of people being hounded out of their lives

And crowded against the edges of society

In this land I have learned that my skin wears me like a uniform

It is its own signifier

Before I can speak

My brown skin tells the world my worth

If you're a racialized woman, everything you've heard is wrong

Follow the rules

Jump hoops

Gig

Labour as a proving ground, a killing field

Nothing, I learn, will ever be enough.

I lift my eyes from the screen and find more cruelty than I can bear.

A hard knot of what is real—greed

Its engine thrumming like a heartbeat beneath the veneer of a functional world.

It would take nothing at all to fall

To disappear into the statistics.

A price that somewhere, someone paid to cool their rooms and run their baths.

Depression



The Parade.¹ Edited photo, by Author, 2020.



The Line. Edited photo, by Author, 2020.



Don't Tread on Me. Edited photo, by Author, 2020.



Camo. Edited photo, by Author, 2020.

Modern shipping is so efficient, it's cheaper to send Scottish fish to be filleted in China and back again than it would be to do the filleting at home. But that efficiency comes at a price: of ships reliant on this one waterway to get to the bounties of Asia, and of crews who spend months away from home, missing the births and birthdays of their children, to bring us what we need, and what we think we need. (George, 2021, para. 6)

¹ This series of four images were taken by the author on a major street in Toronto, Canada, in October, 2020. The images feature anti-lockdown protestors, who, accompanied by police escort, shut down a major city artery and main shopping street to protest the COVID-19 lockdowns as an infringement on their rights.

Slate—

Amazon Admits Drivers Sometimes Have to Pee in Bottles While on the Job

(Politi, 2021, April 04)

According to the rules of the Gush-Up Gospel, the more you have, the more you can have. . . . The era of the Privatization of Everything has made the Indian economy one of the fastest growing in the world. However, as with any good old-fashioned colony, one of its main exports is its minerals. India's new megacorporations . . . are those that have managed to muscle their way to the head of the spigot that is spewing money extracted from deep inside the earth. It's a dream come true for businessmen—to be able to sell what they don't have to buy. (Roy, 2014, p. 9)

In Ontario, the country's economic hub, the province's latest outbreak has become emblematic for the way in which the virus has disproportionately affected essential workers in factories and warehouses, many of whom are low-income members of ethnic minorities. (Cecco, 2021, para. 10)

Toronto Public Health releases new socio-demographic COVID-19 data. . . . Certain racialized groups were found to be over-represented in areas with higher COVID-19 case rates, including people who are Black, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Latin American. . . . Approximately 83 per cent of people with reported COVID-19 infection identified with a racialized group [and approximately] 51 per cent of reported cases in Toronto were living in households that could be considered lower-income. (City of Toronto, 2020, headline & paras. 3, 4)

Notice has been given: *This is just the beginning*. . . . Is this the Hindu Rashtra? The nation that we've all been asked to look forward to? Once the Muslims have been "shown their place," will milk and Coca-Cola flow across the land? Once the Ram Mandir has been built, will there be a shirt on every back and a roti in every belly? Will every tear be wiped from every eye? Can we expect an anniversary celebration next year? Or will there be someone else to hate by then? (Roy, 2014, p. 68)

In my land

*I turned into a stranger, petrified on Bloor Street.
In the rush-honk of traffic a rhythm sudden shifts and a
Monolith appears
Curiously
Largely in pick-up trucks
A hieroglyphed column
Of righteousness.*

*A snake hisses: don't tread on me.
A line, the line: holding back the tide of socialism.
A cross: What would Jesus do?
A Trump flag: champion for the wronged, the under-dogged, a snarling
Pink
Mouthpiece of their rights.
A Canadian flag: Camouflaged nationalism
Can you see me hiding in plain sight? This is my land.*

*The parade floats along the best river for its course
Bloor Street
A mecca a temple a glittering altar for the religion we have fashioned ourselves
A pulse—more, more, more
Shops sparkle against the lights of the smartphones capturing the festivities
Lipsticks are passé for those fooled into maskwearing but purple eyeshadow is
All the rage.
With music blaring from car stereos and flatbeds, they tell me*

*They have the right to shop
To buy and to sell
This land is a nation of consumers, they tell me.
I won't pay taxes and in Alberta, where wealth spurts like a spigot from God,
There are no taxes.
We are free.
We won't wear your masks of oppression.
Not to save ourselves from fake news.
We can shoot the virus.
Hide from it in our camo and macho it into the edges of our worldview.
Fuck the government
And the immigrants that the government let in
And the taxes that built this road.*

*Please don't tread on me
The pandemic already takes our breath away
Daycare workers
Grocery store clerks
Migrant tomato and parsley pickers
Drivers urinating in old jam jars
Keeping our rights intact.*

Esprit

Our minds are still racing back and forth, longing for a return to “normality”, trying to stitch our future to our past and refusing to acknowledge the rupture. But the rupture exists. And in the midst of this terrible despair, it offers us a chance to rethink the doomsday machine we have built for ourselves. Nothing could be worse than a return to normality.

Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. This one is no different. It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next.

We can choose to walk through it, dragging the carcasses of our prejudice and hatred, our avarice, our data banks and dead ideas, our dead rivers and smoky skies behind us. Or we can walk through lightly, with little luggage, ready to imagine another world. And ready to fight for it. (Roy, 2020, paras. 45-47)

We live. We continue to exist despite and in spite of the logics of *pression*. This is the breath—*esprit*—that comes from reading Roy’s writing of defiance that endures over decades. I come to feel the simple scaffold words provide. Perhaps this is the way writing, inquiry and activism knit together the bones of resistance. Above, I named the animating *esprit* rage, but what is felt is more nuanced, varying in proportion from one day to the next: some days, pain and sadness; other days, guilt; still others, an ossifying sense of grief. Working through this analysis, excerpts of Roy’s writing and images juxtaposed with contemporary online content become evidence of *pression* accruing; in this inquiry, then, poetry is breathing, and breathing is resistance.

Silence would be indefensible

The stakes are huge

*A million maps drawn and redrawn
boundaries shifted against tightening rumours of scarcity.
A tide of brown bodies spilling from boats like plastic dolls.
The bullying current of need and want and want and need.*

I am prepared to Grovel Think Fight

Words unfurling against the death of rivers and whole continents of lives.

Will this pandemic

Its shifting nightmarescape bring about the new world?

Will bodies curled against despair

Under knees

Bridges

Railroad tracks

Finally be human?

*Rage is a constant companion
A goddess of blue light doomscrolled velvet.
She whispers*

*There will always be a god of economy
Pressing from the wings
Calling lives into service of senselessness
The duress of endless labour
Veiled by the performance of meaning.*

*And yet
What else is there to do? But write
Imagine
A world that has broken with its past
That dreams of stillness, of silence, of
Enough.*

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