

The Goats of Llandudno

**In March 2020, during the Covid-19 pandemic, a herd of Kashmiri mountain goats descended on the locked-down town of Llandudno.*

You did not see me creep beneath
loop my arms and sink my fingers
into the rich stink
of mountain-matted fleece –
like that lost hero who
(suspecting that the giant's arithmetic
could not distinguish man from sheep)
eluded those dumb digits
and regained the sea. History tells
that nobody saw the mortal cargo
cleaved unto the belly of the beast
cheek pressed against milk-sour skin –
spume-coloured, tending yellow.

On an oily crest we rode
to the town, Llandudno
that second Thebes that presumed to bar
Confusion, god of noise and flow
as if the power could be kept out
by well-placed signage and hedgerows
(for from his skull grew roots of bone
not towers into rationed air, but tunnels
into time below).

Evoë!

Now we rove
the tailored streets
and tempered verges
without intent to know
anything beyond thud and squelch
of cloven toe –
chew substance out of signage
irreverently erode
make loose with matter
unconstrained by form
literally: we shit on your hedgerows!

Then as we swell
the emptied roads, wrest rough
music from the cobbles, vault
the paltry magic of the low stone wall –
the godhead's horned image
is remembered, for an instant,
across a procession of rear-view mirrors.
A pair of wine-deep eyes, echo
softly fascinated.