

## Soundbusting

The clouds are silent.

Sparrow on feeder twid-twirrip picks seeds, TSIP! TCHIK!  
admonishes my direct gaze, a don't-look-at-me bird yeep-pyip-TCHAKH!  
Neighbour's angle-grinder howls nyaaarh like Chewbacca nyaa, nyaaarh,  
lawnmower evokes hovercraft evokes light aircraft evokes  
wistfulness for travel. VVVVVVVVvvvvRRrrRRrrr,  
hoverflies mimic bee-threats, buzz go-aways – they can not comprehend  
that I know entomology and have the ken of them; I leave them to their pollen.  
Chrp-trrp-PIPT-PIPIPIP angry spadger-boys bicker, roll pecking pugilistic  
in the gritdust – I am reminded of braking to avoid dik-diks at the rut,  
small creatures grown in temporary stature.

Whurra-whurra-hwoOOoooOOoo, the wind plays telephone lines,  
a one-note Aeolian harp in slightly flat C#  
and hhwshhrrrrwssh the cherry-leaves whisper their sshhwrrr opinions,  
bluster rustles shrubs, flurry oh my sussurous suburbia. Noise roundabout now  
LOOKA-THE- LOOKA-THE- LOOKA-THERETHERE terriers bark at anything  
that movesormakesasound so patriots with flapflags rope snap on whitepole  
'til they're shushed 'n' clickered. Clouds pass.

Hoo HOO-hoo hoohoo, Hoo HOO-hoo hoohoo, mournful song of fatted pigeon,  
squatting fencetop; Hoo HOO-hoo, apologetic triplet of the dove,  
feathereds come now all why unknown why now, twee-tweree, yeep-pyip,  
pirree p'pirree and scridgit-chukk! I swear one said  
'arrivederci' and thinkback 'ciao!' I wonder who is going where,  
terweederoo and why hrrhrr-hrrk, twrrd-churruh,  
infinite variety of voice, no riff used twice, I hear one copying  
the smalldog yaps, another gives us the  
van-reversing sound, Xeroxed Fedex warning from the beak.

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## **The hearing of the days**

Sounds let you know what day it is when there's no routine, and the only constant is anxiety.

### **MONDAY**

Morning van-door slide and slam, footsteps back and forth, the plumph of cardboard on the floor of our storm-porch.  
The veg-box cometh.

### **TUESDAY**

Approaching bin lorry rattle-clatter, beeping into cul-de-sac reverse, boots drag rumbling rubberwheelie plastic to hydraulic whirr, lift-shake-drop, clunk on tarmac, move on.

### **WEDNESDAY**

Monthly, the loud shink and clinkle of glass collection, and slipped last-minute front-door scurries by the forgetful.  
Evening brings a welcome babble of online gaming voices. It is Discord and precious.

### **THURSDAY**

Vacuum, void, lacuna.  
No regularity of sound, a non-day, I drift.

### **FRIDAY**

Familiar car pulls up outside, followed by sharp brass knock of distanced takeaway delivery. Towards midnight, front gardens opposite erupt with white wine cackles even when it rains.

### **SATURDAY**

Bonnets up, DIYers drill and saw and hammer, mowers hum in far-off Lawnland – domestic noises continue as if everything is normal and the weekend has meaning.

### **SUNDAY**

Newspapers rustle as crosswords are sought, staples torn free to permit the distribution of preferred pages.  
There is active quiet and tomorrow we get vegetables.