

## 70 Notices

1

The White Peak in the Dark Peak, the swan bedded down in the shadow of the woolly mammoth.

2

From the aeroplane coming home from Spain, the rawness of quarried hillsides, the moor looted for gold teeth.

3

The pearl of the Dark Peak is the egg of the twite in the upturned crown of its nest.

4

A moor is owned by a moor and no one else, full stop.

5

Spa water - its clear elixir purifying the hill's gut, purified by the hill's gut.

6

Gamekeeper, bait in his knapsack, goshawk feather tickling his ribs, payslip gummed to his heart.

7

For bouncing bomb read wallaby.

8

A five-bar gate plays its harmonica in a force eight.

9

A peregrine stoops, chasing a meteorite.

10

The Dark Peak as flying saucer buzzing the towns and cities  
below.

11

A full moon bottled in a drop of dew.

12

At Kinder Downfall the updraft lifts the water's petticoats,  
throws rain back in the sky's face.

13

Mountain hare, coiled wind-up toy upholstered with thistledown  
fur. In winter the two black tips of its ears are its second sight.

14

The Dark Peak as anti-matter fallen from deep space.

15

The ring ouzel has stolen the vicar's collar. Now he hides in the  
crag.

16

Summer solstice: Chrome Hill conjures its double sunset, cracks  
a double yolk.

17

From *pluvia*, the glitter of golden plovers in flight means rain.

18

Flummoxed by Bleaklow's grouchs and hags I wept into my  
Percy Pigs.

19

The moor: the night sky in solid form, gritstone outcrops for  
stars.

20

To enter the Peak through the millwheel's eye occasions a  
change of dimension.

21

Andy Warhol is standing on Brown Knoll disguised as cotton  
grass.

22

Maiden aunt to the west - Snowdon on a clear day.

23

In thick fog, that sound is the curlew smoking a bong.

24

So it wasn't a holly sapling or young birch, just the ghost of  
another downed airman thrown from his life.

25

The moor: a brain removed from its skull. Grey matter. How  
the north thinks.

26

I took my shadow out for a Sunday stroll but on Black Hill it  
jumped into my arms.

27

The fall of water at Middle Black Clough on the shortest day.  
The ancient tribal queen opens her coat to show us her necklace  
of beaten tin.

28

The summit was there. Then it wasn't. Then. There. It. Was.

29

Torside Clough, its giant ammonite, winding staircase rising to  
bone-snapping black clouds.

30

Saddleworth Moor followed me back to the house. I had to close the curtains, call the police.

31

They made a telephone with two empty tins and a length of string and called it the Snake Pass. They dropped breadcrumbs behind them as they walked and called it the Pennine Way.

32

Rambling on God's open hand, wild camping on God's palm.

33

"...so the moors and the mountains were muzzy with mist and every hill wore a hat of mizzle on its head."

34

Ingots of mist cast at dawn in the valleys and cloughs of the White Peak.

35

"Happy Birthday!" A silver helium balloon dragging its red ribbon over the moonscape of Kinder Scout. Houston we have a problem.

36

Spring rain is the new gin, with heather botanicals and bog asphodel notes.

37

A sudden flutter of green hairstreak on Lantern Pike - or someone has ripped up an old pound note.

38

No one can own a moor, did I mention that, have I made that clear?

39

Regarding the alder: April puts on her dangly earrings again. November tosses the leaves of her diary into the Derwent and Dove.

40

The last elephant kneels at the city gates: the moor has come to the metropolis.

41

Gibbet country. A stiff December night swings from the hook of a crescent moon.

42

Across the wobbly rope-bridge of causey paving, marching centurions followed me every step of the way.

43

Out on manoeuvres, the day yomps across Axe Edge Moor. The night bivouacs, lies low in the tumbledown fort of Carl Wark.

44

When the aliens land long after we're gone, what will they make of this golf ball embedded in Mam Tor, this green stiletto shoe planted on Margery Hill.

45

The four unemployed ravens on Windgather Rocks had their own Goth band once, called...Windgather Rocks.

46

A mass trespass of wodwos on Kinder Scout; the imagination  
will not be fenced out.

47

As kids - I admit it - we lit fires that still smoulder under my  
eyes.

48

As kids - I admit it - we lit fires that ate through the earth and  
sent California up in smoke, set Kangaroo Island ablaze.

49

Spent cartridges like dead lipsticks in the mud. Red grouse  
feeding on peppercorns of lead shot.

50

No rest till the Atlantic salmon pirouettes on the Salt Cellar or  
the Cakes of Bread.

51

In Lud's Church, young Sir Gawain's cold sweat beads on the  
dumb rocks, drips from the scrolled tip of an outleaning fern.

52

The peat on the plateau like a sprung mattress underfoot. Body  
becomes soul bouncing from black dune to black dune.

53

If I'm really the first human on Mars, what's this old bus ticket  
from Buxton to Flash?

54

A disastrous hike that began in Hope and ended in hail.

55

The empty caverns and caves hum Patrick Hadley's *Kinder Scout*.

56

You can't pocket the Dark Peak. But you can't not take some of it home under your hat.

57

Sheffield and Manchester come to the last lamppost to stand on the rim and peer into the steaming void, to breathe the abyss.

58

The lapwing's antenna picks up 6 Music from Holme Moss. This morning: *Sunlight Bathed The Golden Glow* or *The Day The Rain Came Down* by Felt.

59

In the Woodhead Tunnels extruded nothingness rots, silence decays.

60

A crane fly maps the surface of Featherbed Moss in its landing craft.

61

The extreme sport where pot-holing meets rock-climbing is called a walk.

62

The grindstone of Stanage Edge milling hard white clouds into snow.

63

The tread of a mountain bike tyre leaves anaconda prints in the trail.

64

Galvanised wire fence strung with the wind-shredded prayer flags of dead grass. Derbyshire twinned with Tibet.

65

The giant whaleback of Longstone Edge, anchored only by a wolf's tooth.

66

Grey boulders wallow and slob around Shelf Stones trig point like elephant seals.

67

The only colour that day, the scarlet lifebelts of two fresh poppy wreaths. The name of the crashed plane was 'Overexposed'.

68

Where *water* meets *other*, the river becomes otter.

69

Tripwires of dawn cobwebs strung between fruit and thorn.

70

Snowed under by snow, the lost lad writes Lost Lad on stone with a stone.

Simon Armitage

Commissioned by Off the Shelf Festival of Words to celebrate the Peak District National Park's 70th anniversary in 2021.