

THIS IS HAPPENING

Wed 30 Nov, 2016 – in Rainbow Street, the used condom has been here for seven days. Yesterday, in Coleman Road, a decapitated pheasant. Today, in Rainbow Street, a dead rat.

Thurs 1 Dec

– the wren flies low, from garden wall to garden fence.

This one kneels
on a newspaper,
and holds out a cardboard cup
with both hands.

This one has a stick.

This one has
what look like presents next to her on the
pavement,
and a small bottle of water.

In the park, a green towel; yesterday crusted with frost, today it is soggy. On the field, in front of the lake, a boy dances.

Fri 2 Dec

– by the lake, two long-tailed tits.

Sat 3 Dec – in the park, the towel, muddy now and folded. On the edge of a bin, a wren. Next to the bin, a bag of clothes. In the bare cherry trees, chaffinches twitter. The dog snuffles in the grass. At the top of the hill, a condom.

Sun 4 Dec

– in the tree, a blackbird.

On the path, a red, suede ballet pump ahead of the green muddy towel, off the path now, twisted and once again frosted.

Mon 5 Dec – in the alleyway: a nylon sock, a Ribena carton, pieces of beige dog shit.

– a single magpie.

Later, in the cycle lane, a black glove.

Tues 6 Dec – in the alleyway, the nylon sock has gone.

Thurs 8 Dec – my gums need firming up, they are spongy, and bleed easily.

Fri 9 Dec – in Comfort Street, a fedora on top of the orange-blossom hedge.

This one has an injured hand.
His trousers
hang low as
he limps across the road.

Thurs 13 Dec – a scaffold lorry mounts the kerb.

– a single magpie.

This one has created a
foam and fleece-filled nest
in the entrance of a
disused shop near the bus stop.

This one sits in front of
MacDonalds. A man in a suit
talks to her animatedly.

Wed 14 Dec –

This one prays
opposite The Famous Cock.

Thurs 22 Dec –

This one is administered to
by a man who clasps his hand,
bends down to hug him and kisses his forehead.

Fri 23 Dec –

– in the park, on an island in the middle of the lake,
two black cormorants fan their wings.

Mon 26 Dec –

This one looks cold.

Wed 4 Jan, 2017 –

This one sits with his arms
inside a sleeping bag,
propped up and squared off,
like a sculpture.

Wed 11 Jan – in the alleyway: two Grolsch cans, one crushed, a small blue plastic bag, a small black plastic bag.

Thurs 12 Jan – in the alleyway: a flattened out Mc Cains Roasts cardboard box with blocks of yellow, like a Rauschenberg.

Fri 13 Jan –

This one is walled against the
snow behind a large duvet.
On passing, the handles of a
wheelchair are visible.

Wed 18 Jan –

This one wears an appliquéd
hat, a mosaic coat, and is
surrounded by bags.

Thurs 25 Jan – outside the pub on Coleman Road, on a piece of card, a mop head; on the mop head, a dog shit. In the alleyway: a Tesco's carrier bag, a white plastic bag, several pieces of scrunched up tissue, a JPS cigarette packet.

Mon 30 Jan

– the tits chirrup, chased off
by the crow.

This one wears shiny blue shoes and sits on a tree stump.

In the alleyway: a strawberry Ribena carton with green straw.

Tues 31 Jan –

This one sits under a golfing umbrella.

Thurs 2 Feb – in the alleyway: a paper cup, two piles of soggy tissues, a drinks can and the Ribena carton. In Tower Mill Road, two mattresses provide springboards for running schoolchildren. In Comfort Street, a cigarette packet.

Fri 3 Feb –

This one climbs out of an orange sleeping bag.

This one sits in a grey sleeping bag.

Sun 5 Feb - in the alleyway, the Ribena carton.

Fri 17 Feb – in Comfort Street, a large pile of shit. Human?

Sat 18 Feb – in Comfort Street, the shit has been trodden in.

Mon 20 Feb - in Comfort Street, the shit is now a schmear.

Wed 22 Feb – in Comfort Street, the schmear has become a scrape. Things can change, with the repositioning of a sofa, or a switch of coffee pot.

Thurs 23 Feb – in Dowlas Street, a bin bag spills used nappies into the road. On the pavement, a radiator roller loaded with white paint.

Fri 24 Feb –

This one wears a sleeping bag as a cape.

Sat 25 Feb – in the alleyway: a pair of disposable gloves.

Sat 4 March – in the park, a man cracks a whip.

– two magpies.
Birds tweet.
Daffodils.

Fri 10 March –

This one has bare
feet, a Russian hat
and a Slazenger bag.

– in the park, a single magpie.

After the park, I'm locked out. Emergency locksmith: £466.80.

Sun 12 March –

This one wears a
neon yellow hat and drums
his
fingers on a paper cup.

This one kneels,
forehead on the floor,
hands cupped around a
cardboard sign.

This one carries a
sleeping bag in its
drawstring bag.

This one's dog sits on a
crocheted blanket.

Wed 22 March

- in the park, freshly mown grass.

Fri 24 March –

This one wears a black blanket
and sits against an electricity
box. On his right hand, a swallow tattoo.

This one drops his bedding roll.

This one is all blue: blue jacket,
blue sleeping bag, blue rucksack,
and a thumbs up to her friend.

This one holds out a cream woollen hat.

- blossoms sparkle.

Tues 28 March – in the alleyway: a pair of high-heeled black mules and a Red Bull can.

- in the park, two squirrels.

Fri 31 March

- white blossoms,
grey sky.

Mon 17 April – on the wall, in the park, a blue pullover covered in shit.

- a blackbird.

Wed 19 April – in the alleyway, a whiff of piss.

Wed 3 May

- in the park, a long-tailed tit and a crow.

Mon 15 May – in the alleyway: a chicken box.

Tues 6 June

– after the rain,
swallows.

Later, on Comfort Street, an umbrella drifts along, upside down.

Thurs 22 June -

This one carries his house in
a rucksack with colourful
blankets tied on.

Mon 3 July – in the alleyway: two pairs of shoes sit at a distance, toes
pointing towards toes.

This one stops to hitch up his
well-stuffed backpack, and
swishes his stick.

Tues 4 July – in the alleyway, just one pair of shoes now, set asunder at a
distance of two or three feet. A broken bottle stands next to one of the shoes.
Later, a single shoe remains, and the bottle.

Wed 5 July – in the alleyway, the toe of the shoe points to the neck of the
bottle.

Thurs 6 July – in the alleyway, in between the shoe and the bottle, a tissue.

This one has covered his
face with a soft yellow cloth.

This one has covered his
face with a red T-shirt.

Mon 10 July –

This one has covered his
face with a blue T-shirt.

Tues 11 July –

This one sits upright.

Wed 12 July – in Coleman Road, outside the pub, two black bin bags, contents scattered by foxes.

– a pink-tinged wild carrot.



Daucus carota

In the park, a dead animal stretched out on the grass, its left haunch in a hole nearby. The dog rolls in the hole. In the stench.

- in the lake, the swans, not seen since April as they nested a sterile egg. In the middle of the lake, on the island, the heron, and two cormorants. On a landing jetty, a rat. Swallows sweep down to the lake. A magpie. Later, five more.

Mon 17 July –

This one has bare feet and sleeps with his head on a gold lamé pillow.

This one sits underneath the cashpoint machine.

This one sits outside Tesco Metro.

Tues 18 July

- in the park, seven ducklings and five goslings. One of the goslings, still fluffy, is smaller than the rest.

This one is bare-foot and sits cross-legged outside Lidl, a walking stick on the pavement beside him.

Mon 24 July –

This one sits outside the Holy Door.

Sat 5 Aug –

This one has a rose-patterned blanket.

Tues 8 August –

This one holds a newspaper over her face.

– in the park, a dead starling.

Sat 12 Aug –

These ones sit on coloured blankets outside The Color Company.

Tues 15 Aug –

This one wears headphones.

Mon 21 Aug –

– in the park, the heron elongates its neck at the dog's approach.

This one bends her head
onto her knees.

Wed 23 Aug – in the park, all the yellows.

Thurs 24 Aug – in the park, in the lake, an upturned duck.

Tues 5 Sept

– in the park, in the lake, a
moorhen: yellow legs and red
beak, stands pedestalled on a
wood block.

Mon 11 Sept –

This one holds out a heart-
shaped container.

Wed 4 Oct –

– in the lake,
an upturned
swan.

Thurs 12 Oct

– in the park, the wrens.

In the park, under a tree: a pair of blue trousers, a Hawaiian shirt, a clump of
straw with a glob of purple gunk in it, and a plastic carton containing the
gunk.

– later, nine black-necked, black-
beaked, white-chinned geese.

Sat 14 Oct – in the park, a dead fox. Flies.

Wed 24 Oct – in the alleyway: a wash cloth and a baby shoe.

Tues Dec 5

– starlings.

Sun 17 Dec –

This one has a bulldog.

This one is wrapped in a
beige blanket.

This one leans in the
doorway. Behind him, broken
glass.

– nine magpies.

Tues 26 Dec – in the alleyway, a pair of jeans turned inside out.

Mon 1 Jan, 2018

– goldfinches bounce the chicory
stems.

Wed 3 Jan – in the alleyway: a pink pedal car and a pile of kids' books:
Clean Break, *Lily Alone*, *Unpredictable Tales*, *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Hard
Luck* and *Diary of a Would-Be Princess*.

Thurs 4 Jan – in Comfort Street, just past the alleyway, the door to No. 14
stands open, rolls of beige carpet heaped in the yard. A pair of black boots in
the hallway. Is this the clean break?

Thurs 12 April – in Dowlas Street, opposite, a white, horse-drawn hearse
contains a coffin. B-I-L-L spelled out in white flowers. A man, wearing a top
hat and carrying a stick, leads the cortège – the hearse and two executive
cars, empty except for their drivers. A photographer runs alongside. A
rehearsal?

This one has made a double
bed out of crates dressed
with pink and blue sleeping
bags.

Sun 15 April - just after midnight, Dad dies.

Thurs 10 May - in the bedroom, a dead mouse.

Fri 11 May

- in Tower Mill Road, a goldfinch
sways in the Russian Vine.

Sat 12 May - in the bedroom, a dead coal tit.

Tues 29 May –

– blue tits in the bushes,
goldfinches on the grass.

Sun 3 June – in the alleyway: a broken Flymo, a Morrison's cellophane bread wrapper, a Strepsils blister pack. In Comfort Street: receipts, baby wipes, a flattened juice carton, an empty plastic water bottle.

Sat 9 June

– in the park, a sparrow.

Mon 11 June – in the park, under two large trees: two pop up tents, a jumble of laundry bags, a Mobile Scheme bike, two shopping trolleys filled with blue plastic stacking chairs and an ironing board. In the long grass, a crutch.

Thurs 5 July –

This one lies,
corpse-like,
in the flowerbed.

Thurs 12 July – in the park, at the top of the hill, a man with a plant stalk behind his right ear stands and strips another stem.

Mon 16 July – sweating and tingling in an airless night, 22 degrees. The noise of a party echoes across walls and pavements. Sirens. Traffic. The dog pants. I am fearful that the weather systems are stuck.

Fri 27 July – in Rainbow Street: a dead rat. In Tesco Express, the front page of the *Daily Mail* leads with a full-page image of a dead rat, and the headline, "A Plague of Rats Due to Heatwave".

Sun 29 July – in Rainbow Street, after ten weeks of drought a rowan tree lies flat on the pavement, its root system loosened like a baby tooth.

Wed 22 Aug - after a week camping in a field I return to hard surfaces and routine.

– four magpies.

Fri 24 Aug -

This one lies in a red and black sleeping bag next to a sign which says CO2.

Sat 25 Aug – in the alleyway: a chicken box, Hot and Tasty, a Flora Light carton and a Fruit Shoot bottle. In Rainbow Street, in a tree, a rainbow Pinata.

Sun 26 Aug – in the alleyway: a Budweiser beer bottle, the chicken box, the Flora Light Carton, the Fruit Shoot bottle and a small, brown, soft, curled dog shit.

Thurs 6 Sept – in the alleyway, the dog shit is gently pitted and dented, now, like an ancient rock carving.

This one awakens when the door to the house against which they are sleeping is opened and a person carefully steps out.

This one, on the floor, and covered by an anorak, has a Starbucks cup at her fingertips.

Sun 9 Sept –

This one's head and white-socked feet stick out either side of an InLonUK BT hub.

Mon 10 Sept – in the alleyway, the small brown dog shit is becoming desiccated and has a crumbly white film on top. Later, in the park, in the lake, a wine bottle wobbles alongside five white-beaked coots.

Wed 12 Sept – in the alleyway: a blue plastic bag. At the top of the alleyway, the dog shit is further softened by rain.

Sat 15 Sept –

This one hinged at her hips, leans on the stick in her left hand and holds out a Costa Coffee cup with her right.

Sun 16 Sept

– in the park, in the lake, two swans.

Wed 19 Sept – in Tower Mill Road, against the chain link fence: an Archives Fellowes box, a beach mat, part of a rowing machine, a tipped out laundry bag, a plastic plant pot, several carrier bags, the packaging for a TV, a chrome-plated, rusting shower rack, a squeegee mop, the box for a Fluval UNO Aquarium set, a Sharp Microwave, an air mattress, the box for a paddling pool, an artificial Christmas Tree, and a can of ant poison. Later, in the park, in a tree, the carcass of a pigeon, snagged on a branch, its wings, holey like lace.

