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Chiswick Horticultural & Allotments Society entry

60. Poem: "Ifs and Buts"

Ifs and Buts

Through a pockmarked window
Lie the thawing watercolours of springtime
Wildflowers entwine with one another
Curling round grassroots, sunlight dappling earth
The ifs and buts have faded, Christmas lists and scarves forgotten
The snowdrops and the wood sorrel bloom

Walking through the sun-drenched streets
Squinting at the blinding light that streaks the paving yellow
There may be a cooling breeze, or little to soothe the heat
Either way, the oak trees grow before your eyes
The ifs and buts have faded, jumpers and windy days forgotten
The begonias and dahlias flourish

Hearing the crunch of leaves beneath your soles,
The sky, a dusty cornflower-blue, is dotted with drifting clouds
A blanket covers the ground,
In russet, saffron and gold
The ifs and buts have faded, school-free days forgotten
The marigolds and chrysanthemums thrive

At last, it's dark and cold,
Stark-white snow falling silent to the ground
Walking feels like stepping on pillows
At night, branches and twigs get a new coat of paint
The ifs and buts have faded, Wellingtons and puddles forgotten
The heathers and pansies blossom

Whatever the season,
You will always have ifs and buts
Each one a new beginning

Pull out the roots,
Re-plant everything,
Start over.