Haiku by Philippa Wetherell

In August the Poetry Workshop at the Carmelite Centre practised haiku. Participants produced poems which were then discussed in the group online. Here are fourteen haiku by Philippa Wetherell, with her opening note.

“I send this offering of Haiku knowing that I have in no sense perfected this fascinating form, but that in the struggle I have learnt a lot about disciplining language and about aiming at suggestiveness rather than overtly spelling out an idea. I have also become more conscious of focusing on a present moment and noticing small details, so I hope this is reflected in some of the poems.”

                     A lone bird engaged

                     in sustained converse with itself

                     Heard and held though in fog.

                     Look, a single leaf

                     clinging on to blackened branch

                      sustained by a thread

                     Tiny tiny bubbles

                      purple-green arcs in the sun

                      lost in a breath

                       Four tall straight talking

                       lemon daffodils gold centred

                        in pink twilight.

                       Swiftly greying sky

                       sudden burst of slanting rain

                        slivers of sunlight

                       Did I smile first

                            or did you?

                        Opening out on approach

                         in all your pink finery.

                          grey moon in outline

                          in dull sky with slivered slice

                          awaiting latent gold

                          Open the door, masked

                          outside a new morning world

                           young and fresh in fog

                         A sociologist said :

                         No certain exit from uncertainty-

                          with soaring numbers, how true.

                          Shadow glimpsed, ghostlike

                          dropping off beans, carrots leeks

                           no touch, no eyes meet.

                           Seniors, old wise ones

                            called to attack the virus

                            by doing ‘nuffin’.

                            Drowning in things, lost

                             submerged, hardly surfacing

                             for breath and freedom

                            Stretched on yoga mat

                            delving deep into philosophy

                             lost in time and tome.

                             No bell tolls the hour

                             but none walks in the blank street

                              in time of curfew.