

Aftermath

Lockdown over. Streets are empty. Snipers leave their rooftop roosts and bombers nestle down in hangars. Close protection stands down. Bodies unguarded, commandos leave their hidden locations. Men return to corps – their uniforms hollow. Dogs sleep in pounds, squatters dissolve in lairs, tramps in gutters.

Pre-emptive policing: tapping, snooping, pre-dawn swooping, the world not watching while democracy shrinks. The mother of all parliaments has silenced protest. Steel rings surround ancient minsters. Our daydreams of revolution are folded away. Who would have the keys to this town on this day?