

CHRISTINA COLLINS

The Time on Temple Street

The bells of St Philips pull us up Temple Street
With their chaotic Sunday-wedding peals.
The wet, grey streets are littered with their confetti clangs.

Then the pause. Time is sliced up. On one side, ringing jubilation:
The other, the lugubrious carving of the slow hour.
Between them, an uncrossable border of silence.

Fixed to the cathedral gates on Colmore row,
The black face of an angel scowls above the fountain.
She holds an open book that reads:

Who giveth to drink
Will never be thirsty

Her stone shell bowl is cobweb dry. The bells keep ringing.
Time is an impassable frontier,
Between the age when the city made bells,

And now's luxury retail in general want;
When it forged glass, lamps, traps and chains,
Before we were trapped and chained to desires we cannot sate,

Between the time of water
And thirst.