

78, Derngate Guestroom

If I awoke in a room like this, I would plan my day; plot it down straight lines of black and white. No grey. I would stretch, elongate muscle fibres. Align my body. Face the day full on. Pulling the drapes would display the garden covered in snow. Ordered orchard trees would march in dark rows, their branches outstretched. Beyond; the river, edged with bladed reeds bending in unison. A chevron of geese would soar overhead.

The clock would order time. Precise packets, rhythmic tick-tock, tick-tock, from square turrets.

As I walked to the shops, my stride would be even. My shoes would pattern the snow; cubes following triangles. Repetition, printing the pavement. Telegraph wires inked against the morning; lines leading me to town. Eaves, lit by lengths of snow and glittering icicle bunting, shaped like spears. It would not take long. My list of items crossed through quickly, the ringing of tills, efficient. On my return I would note park railings, standing to attention without wavering; caging a square of snow. And a magpie would enhance the monochrome scene with a flash of iridescent blue; the colour of bedcovers.

In the kitchen, the flour would fall through the grid of sieve and the cakes bake uniformly. Prisms of sharp light would pierce in fans of brightness; coat everything with green tint, reflecting the tiles on the floor. We might play cards in the afternoon, laying clubs on hearts, diamonds on spades.

After such a day, I could sleep.
Safe under my canopy of lines;
my dreams cradled in patterns.