

The Last Page

29 and 30 November 2020

*Using the rhyme words from Vikram Seth's
The Golden Gate, stanza 11.29 and 11.30*

As 2020 nears completion,
gurgling swiftly down time's drain,
and leaves behind its vast accretion
of damaged lives, despair, rage, pain,
let's build our souls some insulation,
not give way to desperation,
put our faith in humankind
and the power of the mind.
May politicians' treachery
be no more wrapped in pious sighs
(no way to hide their lyin' eyes),
buffoonery and lechery
in office meet with decent scorn
and find they are no longer borne.

Greenhouse gas accumulation
challenges the world's combined
resourcefulness. The fermentation
of bullshit would leave us resigned
to dying off without compunction,
but we can overcome disjunction.
The clock is nearing 12 at night
but tunnel's end shows flicking light:
I'll join a crowd, not be a stranger,
join hands, write letters, march, and then
do it again, again, again.
It's hard to face how real the danger,
feel climate grief, but then the lust
for life kicks in. In science I trust.

Jonathan Shaw