

Brian Doerksen

"Every Mother/step Up"

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Something went badly wrong.

At first we didn't notice. We got used to bumping about
together and stepping
On each other's toes. Funny how that happens.

We felt it in different ways. Some people thought they
were getting bigger or
Their skin was over-sensitive and they needed to
insulate themselves with
Something. But others felt squeezed, choked, and
confined and sought open
Spaces which they never found.

But the world was getting smaller and smaller. It was
like a balloon going
Down. Everything getting tiny, brighter, more intense
and squashed up together.
It was cluttered, uncomfortable - you couldn't find
anywhere to sit down.

I was everybody's mother in nightly tears before the
television news. My
Children in floods, sackings and revolution. It was all
going sour. It was all
Going sour.

I was scrubbing individual stones on a huge beach. I
was making sandwiches for
The whole of Somalia. I was shouting 'Fire!' in a
thousand languages. I was
Plugging a million dykes with my failing fingers. I was
baking languages in a
Million fires. I extended trillions of fine wires. I was
scrubbing fingers upon
A beach in Wales. I was firing nights...

I was suddenly very tired.

How do I miss you. Really miss you.

(indecipherable)...
In one bigger bay
You gave all the frozen wind
You gave them away

Set up, boy, set up
The boys set up for the show
No one who was there last night
Gave out or ought to know

Set up, boy
Set up my boys
Below that river bend
It's all that we take care of
It's all we have to show

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