

TAKE THE WATERS

By Dan Shaw

NOTE: FX SCRIPTED TO BE DISTANT AND DIRECTIONAL

FX: TREES CREAK IN THE BREEZE

Take a walk down Coronation Road,
Called after a king,
Not the chicken,
Off the way to Stixwoud,
Past the caravan park,
Into the trees,

FX: CHILDREN PLAY

We're at the back of Petwood,
Can you peek the lawns?
Or are you lost
In a sea of budding rhododendron,
Blinded by pine and shining silver birch?

Are the little bridges over the dykes slippy,
Mossy,
Creaking,
Or dusty dry?

FX: A LIGHT BREEZE

Take a moment,
Breathe,
See,

When are you?
Our view changes with the shifting of the seasons,
Winter, we huddle and savour the cold light,
In summer, we bloom,
And between?
Shifting sands,
Wet weekends,
Dry spells and golden nights,
But ever present,
Outside something always happens,

FX: A FIRE CRACKLES LOW

The tarmac bleeds into leaves,
The odd solitary street lamp rusts,
They'd have been gas once,
Torches in the dark,
Flanking the way to the heart of the wood,

FX: DRILLING IN THE DISTANCE

Men came here armed with shovels,
Theodolites, and cash,
A hunt for dark coal,
Fuel for the ever hungry fire,
Gnashing metal,
Dark, sopping caverns,
Dust and sulphur,
Yellow skies,

FX: RUNNING WATER

Questing for soot they found water,
Pure, healing, clear,
Metallic,
Bromine-rich,
Iodine-heavy,
Fresh,
Valuable water,

They built a temple to it,

FX: A STEAM TRAIN WHISTLES AND CHUGS

The lusher came in droves,
Under heavy steam,
Brought by coal-stuffed trains,
To schvitz and take the waters,

FX: A STEADY DRIP

It was bottled too of course,
But all discerning souls know,
Vitality is better supped at source,

On they came,
In spite of class,
Wealth,
And the dropping of bombs,
In suits, and uniforms,
To escape the smog,
Pestilence, infirmity,
Age, plague and war,

FX: BOMBS THUD

Until the well could bear no more,

In ruins, now,
The spring dry,
The paint peeling,
Decay where once promised rejuvenation,
Still, in those crumbling bricks,
The steam,
The promise,
The life rests,
Fossilised,

Trace a hand over this failing facade,
Feel the cold bones,
The echoes,
And the sparks,
Deep, deep in the dark,

FX: AN ORGAN PLAYS

We have new rituals now,
New churches, pursuits,
New recreation,

Nestled beside this ailing tomb,
Once laid the burnt down cricket pavilion,
Soon a phoenix rising for a night at the flicks,
From ashes came opportunity,
Popcorn, and light,

FX: THE DRIP RETURNS

Funny isn't it,
How life can turn to ruins,
And ruins to life,
A site that died so many times,
But still, a beacon in the night,
Magnetic,
Hypnotic,
Alive,

The everyday returns as we pass on,
Heading village-ward,
Tea-rooms,
Bowles, then,
Rows of perfect houses,
The daytrippers who stayed,
The farmers who came in from the fields,

FX: LIGHT TRAFFIC NOISE AND GENERAL CIVILISATION

Our road evaporates into others,
Carrying us to hotels,
Formal lawns,
And the ghost of the old station,
Heirlooms of those who came before,
Heavy under steam,
Bounding out of carriages,
Packed with city air,
To escape the dust and sulphur,
The ever hungry fire,

To stop, breathe, see, and take the waters.

FX: DRIP, DRIP, DRIP