Y2K

By Therese Lloyd

When I was “in despair” (the dark days
when I actually used such terms)
I noticed the behavior of animals —
    sleep when tired, eat when hungry
That made a lot of sense to me
and yet I felt different
    I felt my humanness too much
No fly ever wonders whether it should make
lots and lots of maggots
    It gives birth on a mound of cat food
or inside the rubbish bin
As far as I know
it’s not worried about overpopulation
or what sort of environment its kids
    will grow up in
My humanness sees me at an art gallery
    watching others
        watching walls
My humanness gives me dark thoughts
of cruel behavior
    You are in the States
a visa glitch and there you remain
    Like Star Trek, I talk to you on a screen
        your face half a second out of sync
with your speech
    I’m in the future
        my Tuesday is already over
and I want to tell you all about it
    to prove my superiority
That lovely conceit of time
    that saw people travel from all over the world
to be in Gisborne
    for the first sunrise
        of the new millennium
Remember
how we all thought the sewer pipes would burst
    and the criminals would escape
or something like that
    Y2K packs sent to every household
because no one knew for certain
    what the numbers 2000 really meant
Somewhere, people, important people
cowered in bunkers
    fearing the worst

Source: Poetry (February 2018)