

## Better Nature

Dear Manager of my local Morrisons branch;  
regarding all the litter on your sprucely-landscaped  
grounds, flourishing under the sign that trumpets  
'Bringing you the best of Scotland'. Sadly, the winter just past

revealed, as the shrubs died back, the same old  
discarded junk: a trail of throwaway drinks-cans, disposably-  
branded cups, (contents, dregs to barely drunk), sneezed-  
through tissues, off-cuts of pipe just chucked, tradesman's

tape strewn and tangling in nature's way. Earlier,  
verbal appeals having failed to take root: the first time,  
it was the council's patch; the second, agreeing  
it was growing on your watch, assurances scattered

came to nought, oversight prevailing. If you'd witnessed  
the used-nappy bundle hung among a cluster  
of saplings; if you'd envisaged those same trees  
bearing their future of parcelled shit-and-piss fruits....

It all stems, I know, from others' casual misdeeds,  
those strands of unthinking behaviour that can spring  
from deeper things, strangle roots of promise; their tendrils  
winding up subsea, stifling the life of once-timeless oceans.

I grow dizzy picturing the planet – a swirling mass  
of plastics, polyethylene scarfing in place of cloud; so forgive me  
for starting small, with this fucked-up fraction of Earth,  
before its impression of indifference hardens into a fossil.

It really needn't take much – perhaps an afternoon – to fish  
out the worst embedded stuff, then a follow-up trawl once  
a week – just to keep abreast: a small price for grasping the thistle,  
coming up with the best of Scotland. Please don't bin this epistle.

Yours hopefully

**Mora Maclean**