

## Fallowfield

Called an asshole she stood in the crowd called a hero she stood  
in the crowd it was the same crowd

*at least I haven't been long-listed for the Hiding Prize* she said

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Last night in my dream I climbed the bare Tree of Language

from its top I could see we were on an island Oak Leaf Island  
we had been abandoned there by our politicians they didn't want to

be *public servants* any more they didn't want us to care about *lop*

or *weed* the island was strewn with garden words I saw how our job now  
was to climb down & gather those hand-written words & put them back on the tree

for years we worked at this together old verbs & nouns were blathering

at new maroon twig-ends again then one day we felt the island move  
the Tree of Language was revealed as the mast of a ship we its riggers

*its rigours* our words bellying forth as one crazy-quilt map sail

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A fake forced innocence atrociousness pinched silly as if awareness were *twee*

as if an exclamation mark were *the* latest gauche yet ironically-renegade plastic accessory

as if *Breathing!* were summer theatre with all the dated smugness that implies

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The way a partridge doesn't *get* a helicopter I don't *get* these poems there's no  
shame in them