

# WHO ARE WE NOW?



**DIVERSE WOMEN WRITERS ON BREXIT AND HOW  
THEIR WORLDS WERE TURNED UPSIDE DOWN**

**EDITED BY DR KATY MASSEY**

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Diverse women writers on Brexit and how  
their worlds were turned upside down.

Edited by Dr Katy Massey

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*Dr Katy Massey*

WHO ARE WE NOW? AN INTRODUCTION



Welcome to *Who are we now?* a pamphlet of short memoir by women about the effect on their lives of the Brexit referendum. It is also my attempt to find an antidote to the feelings of uselessness I have experienced since 2016, when the Brexit debate began to expose the UK's widening social divisions. The poisonousness of some of the arguments deployed that Spring, the murder of Jo Cox just outside my home town, and another general election since, have done little to mend the torn and delicate fabric of social relations. It feels there has been no respite.

My work is to promote life writing and autobiography. And this pamphlet's genesis occurred when, looking how to formulate a response to these new political realities, I found a pamphlet from 1647 which reminded me of the power of resilience and the necessity of art in troubled times. *A World Turned Upside Down* contains a single long poem, a cry of despair at the state of England during the Civil War. Written by an ordinary person without power or influence, it was phenomenally popular at the time. I thought, if a writer from over 350 year ago felt able to reveal the impact of political events on ordinary people, couldn't I try to do the same?

So, armed with a poster, *Stop ranting and start writing*, in the Summer of 2017 I ran a short series of life writing workshops in Brighton and London. Looking at the Brexit referendum as an event we had all shared – but not assuming their opinions about the outcome - I sought to give attendees the time and space to write about what the experience had meant to them. I also said that they could email their finished pieces to me, if they wanted to.

They did – and all, with a solitary exception, were female. Their brave responses are captured here. Though *Who are we now?* did not begin as a feminist project – and the workshops were split approximately 70:30 female/male – it became clear that female contributors felt they had experienced the brunt of the social and personal fallout from the UK's decision to leave the EU.

The writers are very diverse, not only racially, but also in terms of stage of life, nationality and their family lives. From the French mother of a disabled child's shock at finding herself sharing his outsider status, to the international student at Oxford who has her bubble of privilege cruelly pierced, each piece in the pamphlet proves what feminist intellectuals have insisted on for decades: the personal IS the political. To reduce politics to economic arguments alone is to misunderstand how power works, and leave the vulnerable exposed.

*Who are We Now?* Gives a snap-shot of the maelstrom of identity issues, personal challenges and families torn apart left in the wake of the referendum - as with the adopted Londoner, who describes here how she was alienated from her Northern relatives by the result. Another writer reveals her dismay at her estate agent's assumption that she wouldn't rent her flat to a Romanian – when her own parents, an Irish-Indian couple, had found racism a serious barrier to finding a home in London. Even a victorious Brexiteer finds that the result tainted, while a poet laments the new language of political warfare.

But there is optimism here too. In the final piece, the writer's last-minute decision to join London's Pride march suggests solace can be found in alliances across the borders of sexual and racial identities. For me too, this pamphlet has provided reasons to be hopeful. Recently life writing has seemed more than a little self-indulgent. But, *A World Turned Upside Down* shows that crafting captivating stories from real life can reveal the hidden personal fall-out from high-level political decisions. Whether that is expressly feminist as with *Who Are We Now?* or simply the desire to testify to the reality of our lives, writing our truths matters now as much as it did 350 years ago.

Thank you so much to the brave women who did just that and allowed me to share their stories with you. I hope you enjoy reading about them.

*Carole Villiers*

## THE MORNING OF BREXIT

*How to convey this enormous change to my five-year-old, non-verbal son? That it feels like the ground is eluding me, shifting under my feet? How to express, with a sign, a gesture, that overnight I've become an outsider?*

I shower as usual. I take the time it usually takes to put my make-up on, get dressed, have a sip of water, go downstairs and push open the kitchen door where my British husband is preparing breakfast. I have kept myself from checking my phone or any kind of device which could have given me the news. With my eyes, I silently ask him the question: Yes or No? In or Out? I plunge my big dark blue eyes into his big, sad, light blue eyes. He shakes his head slowly from the left to right.

“What?”

“We’re out.”

I can’t add anything to that. For a second, my brain refuses to process the news. The word “news” has never felt so right. This situation is unlike anything before.

Blanche, our nine-year old, storms in.

“Can I have an egg dad?”

Charles keeps his British phlegm and proceeds, but I’m French and a bit stormier. I can’t hide my feelings from her. She has recently become more aware about current issues and is alert to when something big is happening. She knows that some results are due. “What’s happening mum?”

She looks at me with her special face, the face of a child who can’t bear to see her mum emotional, but who at the same time is fascinated by it. Sadly, passionately, angrily, I tell my Anglo-French bilingual daughter that the UK is not part of the European Union anymore. I can’t remember if I explain it in French or English.

Then comes Dexter. How to convey this enormous change to my five-year old non-verbal son? How to explain to him that he’s become more vulnerable than ever? That it feels like the ground is eluding me, shifting under my feet? How to express, with a sign, a gesture, that overnight, I’ve become an outsider? That I’m now joining him in his alienation? That we are not welcome?

I could do the Makaton sign for “out”. It requires both hands, palms inwards. One is clenched, almost tucked, into the other’s palm. You have to lift it out from the clench with a short, dry movement, as if it was a blade, only instead of falling onto the chopping board, it’s ejected, with strength, finality. Each hand is left alone, exposed, abandoned.

I don't have the will to make the "out" sign to him, but our connection, his sensitivity, mean that he's already picked something of it up.

It's time to go to school, to go out into this changed world as if it is business as usual. I grab my children's hands, I hold them stronger than ever. Their hands, tucked into mine, will not be ejected. They will stay in.

*Clare Ramsaran*

## THE NEW 'US' AND 'THEM'

*In my family, this is told as a funny story. We laugh at the combination of racist discrimination and anti-Irish prejudice that denied our family a home.*

“**T**he rental market’s good around here. It’ll be easy to find a tenant.” She smiled at me. Around us, the estate agent’s phones rang and people wandered in and out of the office. “There are a number of Romanians looking to rent locally,” she said. “But you wouldn’t want to rent your place to them.”

I couldn’t quite believe what I’d just heard.

I was being included as ‘us’ and someone else was being cast as ‘them’. I suspect she, and others like her, would have toned down their language before the Brexit vote – maybe kept their anti-immigrant views out of their workplaces.

It left me with a sour taste in my mouth because, when my parents first came to England in the 1950s, *they* were the immigrants looking for rooms to rent. They told me about the handwritten notices in boarding house windows. *No Coloureds, No Irish*. Well, that pretty much covered both of them.

After World War 2, as the British Empire waned, and the areas of the globe shaded pink shrunk, Britain put out the call for immigrants to help rebuild the country. Some say it was to do the jobs that the English wouldn’t. My mother left Dublin in Ireland for a new life in London, encouraged by her best friend, Sonia, a Lancashire lass.

My father’s family had left India towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. His Grandfather, part of a wave of indentured labourers, landed in what was then the Caribbean colony of British Guiana. Two generations later, my father was on the move again. My parents would never have met, and I wouldn’t exist, if it weren’t for the British Empire.

Their search for accommodation in 1950’s London wasn’t an easy one, and my parents got tired of nearly being offered places to live. I imagine my mother after work, catching the bus to different boarding houses in North West London. Maybe her cup clinked against the saucer, as she drank tea from the landlady’s best china, politely answering questions about her and her husband, toning down her Irish accent, to increase her chances - their chances - of finding a place to live.

At last, she’d be offered some rooms. What a relief. She’d tell my father the good news and arrange for him to meet the landlady. But when he turned up, they were suddenly no longer available. I wonder, was she brazen as she announced this lie to cover the sordid truth, or did she stutter, embarrassed at her own complicity?



Mixed-race couples were not common in 1950's London, so my parents decided on a new strategy. My father would go to make the initial enquiry about rooms to rent, so if they were turned down, it would be straightaway. And if they could accept a brown-skinned young man, presumably they could accept his Irish wife.

I don't know how many places my father had to visit, but eventually he found a landlady who seemed willing to take their money.

"I like you West Indians," she had confided in him. Well, that was a good sign. Maybe he relaxed a little, eased back in his chair and waited to be offered her accommodation, until she continued, "The only ones I can't stand are those Irish."

In my family, this is told as a funny story. We laugh at the combination of racist discrimination and anti-Irish prejudice that denied our family a home. Sometimes a sideways approach is the only way to pass down these uncomfortable truths. The children of immigrants will understand.

Today, there are no longer notices in landlords' windows stating which groups of people they don't want to rent to. That would be illegal. But the sense of 'us' and 'them' came snapping at our heels again when the British bulldog was riled up and unleashed by the Brexit campaign. The referendum result was followed by hateful words and hate-fuelled actions - the windows of Polish shops were broken, and attacks on Eastern Europeans and Black and Minority Ethnic people increased.

The narrative of blaming and demonizing immigrants, or the descendants of immigrants, has reared its ugly head again. Those of us who protested against the National Front, and then the British National Party, and then the English Defence League, fought to change that narrative and the consequences it had for our communities.

I believe that a combination of public protest, education, conversation, books, plays, films and music helped to shift the way that people thought and acted, and that anti-immigrant sentiments became less commonplace, less public. Now I wonder how many Eastern European or other immigrant couples will go through what my parents went through. Maybe they will be turned down by text - or surreptitiously removed from email lists. The methods may be of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, but the impact will be the same.

These are the cultural shockwaves of Brexit. It isn't just about us leaving the European Union, it's about who we become, and how we treat each other when the dust has settled.

Those of us who used to be 'them' and who are now being offered a tentative entry into the 'us' category, need to think about what this really means and if it's something we even want.

Those who voted to remain - or to leave - because they believe in inclusivity and internationalism, need to keep pushing for those principles, even as the mechanisms of Brexit kick in and we head for a destination that many of us are reluctant to reach.

*Natalie Morran-Day*

## MY FAMILY IN THE NORTH

*I'm worried the North wants someone to blame, and I'm even more worried about who that will be.*

I wake up at 06:07 and reach for my phone. Still sleepy, it drops through my fingers, swinging from the spaghetti string charger to the floor. I hoist up the charger and tap the home button. No news notification? I tap it again. Still nothing. Awake now, I type in my code and open BBC News. *Final day of campaigning before historic EU vote*. I got the day wrong. Today is, The Day Before Brexit.

I hear my fiancé stir and I slide over to his side of the bed.

“I had a dream that it was the Brexit result, and we’d voted to leave.”

“It’s tomorrow”, he says, sleepily.

“Yeah, I know, I forgot. I’m worried...”

“We’re not voting to leave. We don’t know anybody voting to leave. Except your family.”

He’s teasing me. I smile uncomfortably and pull the covers over my face.

My family comes from the North of England. The town I grew up in has been going through hard times for as long as I can remember. The last time I visited, a whole shopping street had been boarded up. It felt like a ghost town. Some parts I could hardly even recognise. It made me feel so sad. One evening, I answered my parent’s phone and an old friend had laughed at my accent. He told me that my accent had changed since I moved ‘Down South’. I laughed with him, but sensed a hostility in his voice I’d never heard before.

Back in London, it’s 07:15 and I’m walking through my neighborhood to work. Remain posters hang in almost every window. A man hands out *I’m Voting In* stickers. I take one, and stick it onto my lapel. I feel like I’m doing my bit.

I think back to the argument I had with my parents last night. They told me they feel they’ve been left behind by the South, and why should Brussels get to make decisions about their life? But what about the benefits to science, to health, to the Arts? I’d argued but I get it. They’re angry. But it sounded like they want to drag the rest of the country down with them.

My train arrives at 07:49, and a choir of Remain singers greets me on the station concourse singing upbeat songs. I wonder, who organised this? The mood is good, optimistic. We’re going to vote in. I feel reassured. But still a niggling guilt persists, towards my parents, my upbringing, my hometown. Am I a traitor, with my London postcode and my new accent?

It’s 08:05 and I’m nearly at work. I see EU flags flying, and I’m convinced, now, that we’re going to stay in. The corners of my mouth break into a small smile and I continue my walk.

After years of feeling in-between, torn between my past and my future, it dawns on me that I've never felt so at home, so connected to this city, to the people around me. Where you can be whoever you are, and you can aim for the stars. And with that realisation I don't feel guilty any more. This is my city, my future. This is where I belong. In London, in Europe.

I still don't know how we fix all the country's problems. But Rome wasn't built in a day. Brexit isn't the answer, but at least now we know the problems and perhaps we can start figuring it out. Together.

I wake up at 06:07 and reach for my phone.

'UK votes to Leave EU'.

I am a Londoner and I am European. Now, more than ever.

*Niroshini Somasundaram*

## **DISPLACED**

*The Brits want out. Of what and whom I am not sure. I may have an Australian passport, but my skin colour is brown and when English people ask me that disdainful question: Where are you from? Australia is not the answer they are looking for.*

**T**he day before the referendum result I completed my final exam in Sanskrit. I found this obscure Indo-European language of culture and learning so difficult that I had given up any hope of passing it. I felt disconcerted as I walked to the Examination Hall, and not just from nerves. People were stood around outside wearing blue t-shirts and handing out pamphlets that canvassed support for the EU. Surely there was no chance that Brexit could happen and this was a redundant gesture? I brushed the thought from my mind and concentrated on the test.

The next morning, I woke up at 4am still wearing the same clothes in which I had fallen asleep. My husband was in our flat in London, so I was alone in my room in Oxford. I searched for my iPhone which was lodged in its usual place under my pillow. Mindlessly doing a scan of email, Instagram, WhatsApp and Twitter I jolted awake to a headline.

*Shock as UK votes to leave the EU.*

Leaning on my elbows in the dark, hair plastered to the side of my face, I stared at my phone. I checked the other news sites, but The Guardian, Independent and F.T. were all saying the same thing. I realized this was really happening. As daylight broke I looked outside my window, expecting some physical evidence of this seismic political event, but there was only an eerie quiet.

In that moment, something fundamental shifted in my idea of my relationship with this country. It seemed irrational but I felt unsafe that morning and the world I thought I inhabited suddenly felt alien. It was like finding out that the house I had grown up in and in which I had a happy childhood had been infested by a family of poisonous spiders the whole time. It made me not only question the future but how I remembered my past. I refused to leave my room.

A few weeks before, in early June, I had been sitting in an almost empty college dining hall with my friends Greg and Siobhan. Both were completing graduate degrees in law, a notoriously difficult course that I had recently abandoned for the more whimsical choice of modern history and languages. There was a lightness in the air, despite the stress of our workload and looming exams. Eating a sickly-sweet portion of sticky-toffee pudding off a college-crested plate, I felt happy.

Siobhan was writing a paper on European Union labour laws and conversation naturally turned to politics. Greg is from South Africa, Siobhan from Ireland and I am an Australian citizen transplanted to London's East End with my British husband. However, these details were only superficial differences of nationality and geography as far as I was concerned. Our education and upbringing meant that we had much in common and fell into the category of those liberal progressives who fit comfortably in cosmopolitan cities such as Oxford and London. Our knowledge of English and proximity to English culture led us to have a natural sense of confidence and authority when discussing world affairs.

Barack Obama was still the US President. The fact that Donald Trump had even survived this far in the Republican party presidential nomination race and the UK would shortly be holding a referendum on the EU struck us as pure comedy. None of us on that table believed that either Trump or the Brexiteers could win, although we believed that the fate of both were intertwined.

Amid peals of laughter about the idea of President Trump, Greg asked, "Can you imagine if both came true? We would have to tell our grandchildren that we lived through the Brexit election and saw a former TV-reality show host replace Obama as the President of the United States!"

We laughed unabashedly, and their happy faces shone out among the morose gazes of long-dead scholars whose portraits lined the hall. Were we arrogant or simply optimistic? Perhaps we were a combination of both.

On the day of the Brexit result I thought apprehensively about walking around the area near my flat in the East End, where the odd spray-painted message to *kill pakis* previously inspired zero concern. Just some silly kids, I used to think.

Now they took on an entirely more menacing tone. The Brits want out. Of what and whom I was not sure. I may have an Australian passport, but my skin colour is brown and when English people ask me that disdainful question, "Where are you from?" Australia is not the answer they are looking for.

I paced my room. An hour passed. I brushed my teeth and made some coffee. And then it was midday. Messages of condolences and shock from friends and family started to come through my phone. I got up, exasperated, and decided this was not the way I was going to face this news. I walked out of my room and into the sunlight.

No, now was not the time to shrink back from the world, even if others had decided to.

*Tess Adams*

## THE WORD WEAVER

**D**earest Sis,

A revolution is happening, words  
are reigning: they've banjaxed my irrigation –  
out of the library letters are bouncing, pouring  
themselves liberally all over lineations, blotting  
off rooftops bop bop, raining rheumy spells  
on The Weaver literally slivery poems flowing1\  
from rune – oh, but this mad earth is jouncing  
and it's becoming clear

a word quake is whomping

down

here.

Here. Do you hear me, sis? Here we have new words  
of exit like Brexit and they're divisive as hell  
like noremain like disunion and leave and single  
again, like borders of division,  $28 - 1 =$  splendid  
derision, and Article 50 and WW3 and lop and I  
eye C Bfluxed bridges sag, break into fragments,  
worlds deconstruct, glop onto parchment

My Sis,

I am weeping

tears

of

ink.

*Jillian Geary*

## **BLUES AND REDS**

*A trumpet sounds from my mouth, one with a banner that drops down. We catch each other's grin, throwing it between us like we're in the middle of Wimbledon.*

**M**y bedroom

At 12:26am I joke about my regret at not organising a midnight feast and -

I awake to noise. Peace. Today dangles change like a carrot. David Dimbleby is the voice of Mindfulness telling us if heaven and hell actually exist ...and if it has osmotic borders. So, it's on, and I see blues and reds mostly.

“We're out!” reverberates and hangs in the darkness.

A trumpet sounds from my mouth, one with a banner that drops down. We catch each other's grin, throwing it between us like we're in the middle of Wimbledon, and wondering whether it's ok to wear all white. But we're in Manchester. In bed. Inside a mind that is telling us things can be better.

At 8:27am I'm angered by the discord and forced silences.

There have been a lot of sweeping generalisations as to why people might vote one way or another. It only promotes the disharmony many say they want to avoid. Everything starts at home; in our everyday interactions; the distance between two people; the space between our synapses.

Training room

My hands are tied.  
I count under my breath.  
I hear the click.  
I'm relieved.  
I extend my eyes to the left.  
Their chest rises.  
Job done.

“I hope we can go home early,” we chime as we swipe, absorbed by today's news and unaware of tomorrow's.

“I hate doing this”, detests another, preparing to lock lips. We ship around lifeless half-bodies lying on stale carpet that you could scratch your eyes out with.

We/I inwardly cheer.  
We're/I'm tired, we/I travel, we bow our heads.



## Our bedroom

The sun wakes - my phone sometime later by my dad. I immediately think it's the dog. I capture my heart from rocketing around while I take a breath. I steady it for the words about to try and pinball it around, and down, off one knee – ping! - into my ribs and out of my mouth.

He's still here. His heart is still beating. My auntie's is not. Labour founder, Keir Hardie's, great-great niece, passed last night. Her daughter watched on a screen 200 miles away. I see waves of blues and reds.

We postpone our anniversary.

We go to a wedding.

We/I feel sad and hopeful. The world rotates on hot coals and goes on holiday to sunbathe.

## Patient's lounge

The patient stands before us strangled by delusional beliefs that we cannot untangle. We all feel responsible. Reality is lost. Only the result glares. I bow my head further. To him it's a nod.

In the office, I debate with a white, Irish man that if international relations and individual humanity are skipping hand-in-hand, pulling the rug should not signal a threat to the system, instead an outstretched arm.

People dine on the news but I'm in shock and preoccupied that life support training has become mundane.

## My mind

We're frightened when a balloon pops in a shopping centre as the arena officially re-opens its doors. I'm frustrated that fear has disguised itself; infiltrated; normalised.

I'm offered a new job. My journey in psychology began 15 years ago from the ashes of a childhood spent watching my mum's lung function decline. But training places are bright lights in the ocean. I glide through illusions and judge the decisions of friends by the vividness of their apple cart. At school, we stood on a snake painted with numbers and pretended we were thrown back to stealing fruit from a market. I only just afforded lunch today. I stand in the rounders box and bat out questions... *Do I own a house?* No. *Married?* No. *Children?* No. *Do I count my chickens?* Certainly. *Do I want others to have freedom?* Of course. *Do I want countries to cooperate and celebrate?* Whole-heartedly.

*Have I fully explained my rationale? Said which way I voted? Do any of us have the answers yet? Does a cross in a box change the way you think of me? Did you know who I was before?*

*Margot Farnham*

## FRIDAY/SATURDAY

*The next day is Saturday, Gay Pride. I decide to go to Pride on the spur of a morning that threatens to evaporate into the stasis of depression.*

I am awoken at five by the sound of horns on the Thames. Not the anguished baritone of a departing liner, with family groups standing uncomfortably on the quay side, and the voyagers choking down the moment of grief. A higher note, of the smaller river boats, the same sound as on New Year's Eve.

Brought by these notes from sleep to waking, I remember the referendum result is in. Knowing this like knowing it's Christmas. I don't turn the radio on though because I can't see why the boat men would be celebrating a state of remain. Instead I make a cup of tea, compose myself and turn on the TV. Rolling news. David Dimbleby. I fixate on his tie. Pink sharks? I balance the mug on my knee and spill some on my nightie. "Well, at twenty minutes to five we can now say ... we are absolutely clear now ... The British people have spoken and the answer is: We're out."

I turn it off and get dressed automatically. I feel frozen in time, like the moment before an accident. I go to work. As I come out of Mile End tube, a white Immigration Control Unit van rumbles by and my instinct is to photograph it with my phone, as if, now, it is important to document every small detail. By the time I get to work, Cameron has resigned. This wasn't meant to happen.

The next day is Saturday, Gay Pride. Two weeks before, 49 people were shot dead at Pulse, a gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida. I decide to go to Pride on the spur of a morning that threatens to evaporate into the stasis of depression. I recycle a placard from a People's Assembly demo. On it I write in marker pen a message that seems ridiculous now. On one side *Bogof Boris* and on the other, *Welcome to Boris Island*. Neither have anything to do with being gay, but reflect my view of the former Mayor 'playing' the referendum. The march is starting at Portland Place and I take the Jubilee Line to Bond Street; a family of Italian tourists peer at my incomprehensible placard.

I don't expect what I find when I come out of the tube. The route of the march is protected by barricades along its entire length. I haven't been on a Gay Pride march since the miners headed it with a colliery band in 1985. Things have moved on since then. The afternoon passes like a dream, or an experimental film, made with a hand-held camera.

I trace the source of the parade, the starting-point; hundreds of pre-registered groups have already moved off. Ahead of me is a break in the barricade, and I slip through and find myself in what must be the Faith section. Passing by the Unitarians and a Jewish contingency, I find myself amid a group that makes me feel at home, even though I am a gate crasher.

They are a group of about thirty. I approach a kind looking middle-aged man in a green jacket and I ask him if I can stay and he graciously says. 'All are welcome', and offers me a wrist band. Just as I attach it, the parade begins to move.

I am with Imaan, a LGBTQ Muslim organisation and its supporters. I am at a confluence of events, many being referenced in the hand drawn placards, and buoyed up by the rapturous applause, cheers, and fist bumps the contingent receive from the other side of the barricades. At one point, I look up and see we are being cheered by a group of young women sitting cross-legged like children on top of a bus shelter, one holding up a Portuguese cockerel in rainbow colours.

Among the Imaan group banners, one sends love to Orlando from the gay people of Pakistan. A woman whose sober dress stands out from the pink and green shalwa kameez and saris, carries the message *More fucked off about Brexit*. Some are more light-hearted: *Queer Muslims heart samosas*. One puts religion at the centre: *Allah hearts us all*. My favourite is: *I exist for the expansion of your mind*.

Inspired by the applause, a man in a burkha wearing pink sunglasses gives a twirl for the crowd. It is unexpectedly hot and sunny and by the time we reach Trafalgar Square I am dehydrated. I gingerly sip at a sports drink included in a giveaway bag by a gay magazine which makes me sick. Later, an ultrasound scan will reveal my gallbladder is filled with small stones. As I make my way home alone, the Brexit melancholy returns.



# WHO ARE WE NOW?

On Friday 24th June 2016, UK citizens awoke to shocking news. The referendum decision to leave the European Union was a political event with enormous personal ramifications. Here, a diverse group of women writers describe how their lives were transformed by it.

**Between these pages:**

**The French mother of a disabled child suddenly finds she shares his outsider status.**

**An adoptive Londoner becomes alienated from her Northern family.**

**A daughter of immigrants is shocked to be defined as 'one of us' against a new 'them'.**

**An Oxford University student's bubble of privilege is dramatically burst.**

**A Brexiteer finds the taste of victory bitter-sweet.**

There are no winners and losers in this maelstrom, just humane and compassionate real-life stories of resilience in troubled times.



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THE WORD**

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