

EVELINE PYE

Black Swan

Somewhere close, nuclear warheads trundle down a potholed road and I am concerned that, though they say the risk is low, no one says what *low* means and though there may be a number trapped on a hard disc, no one knows if it's even halfway near to being right.

Then there's the internal report for the shiplift at Faslane, for when it cradles Trident submarines. They had to black out their own best guess so we don't know the chance of a platform collapse, or plane crash, fire, explosion, or even being peppered with plutonium.

It's as though the MoD believe disasters won't happen to them or us, as if they believe all swans are white, because every swan they ever saw was white, as if they think they understand the fickle migration of birds while beyond their ken, a butterfly flaps

its chaotic wings, the wind changes direction and somewhere far away a black swan takes to the air, lifts its heavy body upwards, defies gravity and soars above us.

Invisible in the night sky except for its blood red beak –

a
dark arrow
coming towards us
changing everything.

Author's Note: Black Swan Events in Statistics refer to high-impact, hard-to-predict, rare events beyond the realm of normal expectations.