

**Anna Bradley**

**Library**

I am not here to tell you that this place shouldn't be closed down,  
or that it is sacrosanct. I know people can read anywhere.  
I know people can snatch words wherever they want now.

It's just that this place smells of my childhood  
And I want to carry on touching books with cracked plastic covers and corners as soft as feathers.  
But it isn't cheap to describe this place as a cultural institution

Ideas aren't only apposite in a theatre or in a gallery or a university  
Ideas take place in the near-silence where your mind can expand,  
with the backdrop of beeps and footfall on carpets

That's where ideas take place.

I am not here to tell you we have lost so much  
I know such proclamations are the stuff of nimbyists, fishwives, old codgers  
I know the air is full of digital fizz excitement buzz

I know that technology doesn't cancel out paper  
I think we have so much to teach each other  
Please don't tell me they have no place any more

Don't tell me there is no room for pilling carpets that fill your lungs with dust  
The self-help predictability of something that is the same, day-in, day-out  
There is so much to get away from, you see

It's not only a church or a refuge or a home that is a safe place.