



RIGHT TO VOTE

Positive Images Festival Poetry Competition



Helen Mosley
hemagley@yahoo.co.uk

NOVEMBER 8, 2019

RIGHT TO VOTE

The Human Rights Act protects our right to free elections, which includes the right to vote. Voting is a right, not a privilege.

There will be no tanks or soldiers ranged

There will be no explosions or rioting mobs

There will be no muttered threats or controlling hand

There will be no ferocious sentinels or bullets fired

There will be three lurking devils:

Grotesque in size and fed to excess,

squat, massed and monstrous:

Apathy, Cynicism, and Indifference

Crusted and lined with years of distrust,

scabbed and pocked with lies and broken promises,

armour-plated layers of doubt, derision, and disillusion,

looming they stand as barrier and block

polluting debate with toxic heresy.

There will be a box and your ballot.

To vote is to defy, to take back control,

To give wishes a voice, and to determine

To choose, to instruct, and to strengthen.

Ghosts of suffrage stand alongside you,

the many who agitated, struggled, and protested

present in Spirit,
it takes but a moment.

And in that breath of a moment,
there is privilege and power:
there are your rights
there are our human rights.

Vote

This poem was directly inspired by the 2019 Queen's speech where Boris Johnson's government introduced plans to bring in voter identity checks. Mandatory voter ID – with no free provision – will be a barrier to many people exercising their right to vote.

3.5 million UK citizens do not have access to photo ID, and in 2013-14 about 11 million did not have a passport or driving licence.

“Voter ID is likely to damage election turnout and will worst affect those who are already disadvantaged – including young people, older people, disabled, BAME communities and homeless people.” Liberty
