

Some ominous phrases which had been alien to us back in February, but had become all-too-familiar by May, came through every television screen in Ireland this evening:

“5 kilometre radius”; “on compassionate grounds only”; “hairdressers will close... (eeek!)”

Surely I’m not the only person wondering:

Will it be easier this time, or harder?

And in the absence of an answer, I hand you over to John O’Donoghue, who encourages us to pause and focus on the happy times awaiting us, rather than the difficult times we are in. In times like these, the *“wire brush of doubt”* can *“scrape”* our hearts, if we lose sight of the *“hesitant light”* of hope.

Well, I for one would describe my current light of hope as being quite hesitant. But in the spirit of the final word of the poem—*“beginning”*—I will be trying hard in the coming weeks to focus on the opening up in late November, rather than the locking down of October. (If anyone figures out how to actually do this, please teach me how!)

So... on your marks, get set, six week countdown!!

To Bless the Space Between Us *(Excerpt)*

This is the time to be slow,
Lie low to the wall
Until the bitter weather passes.

Try, as best you can, not to let
The wire brush of doubt
Scrape from your heart
All sense of yourself
And your hesitant light.

If you remain generous,
Time will come good;
And you will find your feet
Again on fresh pastures of promise,
Where the air will be kind
And blushed with beginning.

John O’Donoghue