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Steve Tasane

I leave my fellow poets and head back east along the seafront. It's another Ståde Saturday - free open-air entertainment throughout the summer provided by HBC. I hook up with more friends. I catch the end of the beat boxing & fiddling Hip Hop Folk Dancers. I kid you not.

Then it's 'Toby Toby with the light brown hair' (a favourite bedtime story when my children were little). This time I do jest. The Toby here is our own fellow Hastings Hillbilly, King Size Slim - award winning blues & roots singer songwriter, aficionado of anything that can be rhythmically plucked, beaten or stomped (in a happily rousing positive way that is).

KSS entrances and inspires his foot-stomping audience as usual. When the audience disperses at the end of his set it's still before 9 pm. The nighttime town culture is only just beginning. There are so many cultural choices for a Wild West Hillbilly to experience into the early hours and through til dawn. But this next bit is secret...

democracy, the anti-austerity movement and the LGBT community, he is motivated to get to the bottom of the deceit and misdirection we've been suffering from, and he succeeds in making the source of many problems clear.

Jones discusses the mechanism that maintains the status quo. It's about the government, the civil service, the international corporations, the media and the big PR companies - that's not a list of five things. There's no co-incidence that Jones' five main defendants are the same ones that Donnachadh McCarthy discusses in his very similar book, *The Five Pillars of the Prostitute State*, but neither book is really talking about five things, they are talking about one thing. We all know what lobbying companies are now don't we? Those slick businesses that have a dubious amount of influence on government? Actually that's not quite accurate. They *are* the government - and the media, and the corporations. They are not divisible, as Jones explains by way of some pen-portraits of families we know very well in Hastings - the Rudds, for example, and how the

outside it are not. The idea-set is not maintained by conspiracy, or by a bunch of professional liars - it's just what is passed around, digested and assumed in the group.

I enjoyed combing Jones' book for evidence of the *Guardian* writers' own Overton Window. The most obvious example I found was that this

Jones' detailed and fascinating book will give you lots of practice at spotting some of the most damning blind spots our "Establishment" has created around us, and also helps to give an insight into why no-one with a salary over £100k per annum or so wants to let you vote for Jeremy Corbyn.

## Poetry corner

### Word crayons

Rita Da Silva  
Sand dunes  
silver moon  
pounding tunes

Cherry pies  
trees so high

Words in rhyme  
meaning nought  
Craft abstract thought

### Listen

Laura Shoropa

Listen with empathy  
Speak only truth  
Keep only memories  
Surrender youth

Toil with diligence  
Love without fear  
Live with integrity  
Die without tears

### As Our Souls

Ainsley Gill

Let us drift then, you and I  
through the gloom of a dying day,  
past shuttered shops,  
silent streets  
just the echo of sea our company.  
These familiar places  
lose their focus,  
somehow frayed at the edges.  
What once was ours  
our everywhere  
now lost  
forever  
as our souls

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STMAS & NEW YEARS DAY

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