

I

The ideal society with nothing to do and everything to sell is reconstituted from the ruins of dead slag heaps and fossilised chimney stacks, grassed over and crossed by architectural paths with sculptures like giant marbles lined in meandering arrays. As I left the Safeway Superstore and emerged precariously from parked cars to ask an earphoned young lad the directions to Argos, on realising I needed more instructions on what I want, I left for lunch.

Finding I had reached the high street, pock-marked with a sparse assorted assemblage of people in transit, I strode past its curvilinear frontages preserved in quaint resemblance of a past era.

I heard a sound but to begin with I could not locate it. Entranced like a mesmerised insect enticed to a web, I sought out the sound of Peruvian pipes, dancing seductive melodies in the cool late morning air. Tossing a million into a plush decorated bucket, another figure beckoned.

‘Big Issue’.

I looked at a tattered bag containing coins.

‘The cost is two million’.

‘I do not read the Big Issue’, I replied, ‘but here’s a million anyway’.

The response was in Arabic, but I was not sure.