

Our Late Medieval cobbled-together city of kirkyards, cathedrals, howffs, castles,
closes, courts, vennels and wynds,

hay markets, grass markets, flesh markets managed to hit the twenty-first century
- running! How come?

How come our rudely interrupted parliament talks twice as much sense (or talks
twice as fast)? To make up for lost time?

How come trams and pavement tables are reclaiming our streets?

How come there's shopping 24/7, pubbing, clubbing and all-night kebabs? Wall-to-
wall festivals? Bus lanes and wheelie bins? The Hogmanay Party?

Did a sorcerer step out of a book of old Scottish folk tales, take a 35 in from the
airport, flash his Day-Saver Ticket, to end up in the Southside at no extra cost?

Did Seventies' Edinburgh shock him so much? The boarded-up windows, the litter,
graffiti,

the horses hauling themselves and their carts out on their rounds, their breath
clouding the cold morning air, and Sir Sean Himself riding high on the milk crates?

Did one wave of a corporate wand turn soot-blackened tenements and windowless
pubs into these glass-and-mirror palaces? (Banks, insurance, law and pensions – for
who else retains sorcerers these days?)

For magic happens daily on the Bridges, on George Street, in Tollcross – a nod from
a stranger,

a quick drink with a friend I've bumped into. (I never leave home, but I meet
someone I know).

From my Newington flat the Forth's a Mediterranean blue, there are faraway hills I
can sometimes almost touch . . .

Most of all, when I stand at the top of the Mound, perfectly positioned between God's
Law and Man's (the Kirk to my left, the Bank to my right) I see our city shaped by the
sky

and the sky by our city – and heaven itself seems possible then, if only for a
moment, and if only I would let it. Tenement City. Corporate City. Capital City.
Festival City. World Heritage City, UNESCO City of Literature.

We don't need street maps or SatNav to find where our friends live Together, we are
the magicians, and we make the city

All Edinburgh is ours - and it's personal!