Beyond Two Minutes

Silence. Thousands of memories flood our minds,
Of who we lost, who remains, and who will.
Do we remember their sacrifices, the lives they lived, or the lives they could have led?
What does it mean to remember?

Will it be something physical?
Red poppies resting against cold stone,
Wreaths laid beneath names carved in remembrance.
But will they be known beyond their names?
Beyond the lives reduced to a few letters?

A photograph captures only a fraction of their lives.
One frame in a lifetime that cannot be captured.
But what of the time they bought you ice cream when you were sad?
When they tried to share your interests, but got them wrong?
When life was too much, but they handled the “too much” with you?

But what of the children left behind?
The children, and their children's children?
The stories passed down of a father they never knew,
A soldier whose name the world remembers,
But whose face his child struggles to picture.
“They call him a hero.
But why him? Why my father?
They remember what he gave for his country,
But who remembers what his family lost at home?”

So what does it mean to remember?
Is it a bridge across time? A debt of gratitude?
An active promise?

The clock hits 11:02.

We speak of wars in the past tense,
Yet for some, war is still their present.
For while we speak of wars that have passed,
Others are living through the wars we will speak of.
From Gaza to Sudan,
Children grow up in a world still shaped by conflict.
What is remembrance worth, if we remember today, but forget tomorrow?
Perhaps remembrance is more than simply looking back.
It is recognising what remains unfinished,
And finding the courage to change what comes next.
To remember where we came from,
To question where we are going,
And never be afraid to make our voices heard.
And though the silence lasts only two minutes,
What we carry beyond it must last far longer.