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The Deed Is Done: What's next after Brexit?

The deed is done. Brexit is begun.

The United Kingdom is no longer a member state of the European Union (EU).

And how did we recognize this historic moment? With the false chiming of Big Ben.

So perhaps I could beg forgiveness and paraphrase a stanza in WH Auden's

poem, Funeral Blues

The Euro-stars are not wanted now: put out every one;

Pack off the loons and dismantle the fun;

Pour away the champagne and stop stockpiling food;

For nothing now can ever come to any good.

Or can it?

The United Kingdom (despite two countries not voting to leave, so perhaps the 'united' could be a misnomer) is now in a transition period until at least 31 December 2020, while our government negotiates the nature and style of our future relationship between with the EU - based on the Political Declaration agreed between the EU and the UK in October 2019. This means that, with the exception of treaties and acts (which were not binding to the UK before the entry into force of the Withdrawal Agreement), there is, in fact, no change in our adherence to EU policies and laws. We continue to:

- Apply the EU's Justice and Home Affairs policy (we can still, as before, opt-in or –out of amendments, enhancements, or replacements).
- Be subject to the EU's enforcement mechanisms.
- Be subject to the jurisdiction of the EU's Court of Justice.
- Remain in the EU Customs Union and in the Single Market with all four freedoms, and all EU policies applying.
- Respect all international agreements the EU has signed, and will not be able to apply new agreements in areas of EU-exclusive competence unless authorized to do so by the EU.

And for my industry, the good news is that there is no impact on travel and tourism to or from the UK during the transition period.

But the dust has not yet settled, and we have the prospect of watching what will be the fastest-ever set of international negotiations if we are to finish by 31 December 2020.

For now at least (and back to Mr. Auden's own superb words), there is no need to:

Stop all the clocks, cut off the telephone,

Prevent the dog from barking with a juicy bone,

Silence the pianos and with muffled drum,

Bring out the coffin, let the mourners come.

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