



Nightingale

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Devon Special
April / May 2002



Featuring 17 Devon writers, over 30 young writers and an invitation from The Bridge

AUTHORS IN ISSUE:

James Bell, Devon
Svelana Bjelica
Kevin Blake, Scunthorpe
Andy Brown, Devon
Ruth Butler, Devon
Rose Cook, Devon
Stephen David, Devon
Paul Davidson, Devon
Jack Galmitz, USA
Katy Holderness, Lincolnshire
Alfie Howard, Devon
Christine M. Kirker, USA
Kenny Knight, Devon
David Lighfoot, Lincolnshire
Bogoljub T. Mihajlovic, Yugoslavia
M. C. Newton, Devon
NelsRodwell, Devon
Sam Smith, Devon
Sandra Tappenden, Devon
Susan Taylor, Devon
Frances Thompson, Devon
James Turner, Devon
Tomislav Ž Vujčić
Shane Wolfand, Devon

POETRY BRIDGE:

Gary Blakenship
Christine Bousfield
Mark Brooks
Stephen Clay Dearborn
Terrie Leigh Relf
Denis Garrison

YOUNG WRITERS

Emily Bowdler, Devon
Charlotte Hayward, Lincolnshire
Christopher Millbank, Lincolnshire
Jennie Nash, Lincolnshire
Tom Nellist, Lincolnshire
Caitlin Todd, Lincolnshire



Priory Master Class Workshop Writers:

Roisin Alldis
Layla Ameen
Annabelle Arnold
Robert Belcher
Jasmin Billingham
Louise Brook
Kirsty Chalk
Ami Clarke
Amy Cox
Danielle Cullen
Kriss Dunk
Ashton Forster
Matthew Hall
Harriet Hambly
Atrid Hardy
Paul Mander
Zoe Manning
Eleanor Marchington
Laura Mcleod
Ellie Ransom
Thomas Ravenscroft
Sara Rizeq
Suzanne Ryan
Lauren Teague
Kirsty Thompson
Lyndsey Walker
Stephanie Ward
Max Ware
Rebecca Wilson

Welcome to the seventh edition of Nightingale a local and global magazine for short poems up to 18 lines and short fiction, 800 words or less.

All those limits go to the wall when we have a special edition and that is certainly the case this month when we have not one but three features in a bonus 16 page edition. First up are 17 writers from Devon providing us with a unique sense of place and people. This was the idea of James Bell, Nightingale's man in the South, so I've left him to fill the rest of the details in below. The second highlight are poems from thirty year six children who attended a series of Saturday morning poetry workshops at the Priory School in Lincoln.

As if that wasn't enough we also have some poems from young writers already at the Priory and a brace of verse from Emily Bowdler a 13 year old writer from Devon. The final feature is a small sample of poems from the World Haiku Club Poetry Bridge an Internet Poetry Discussion Group lead by John Carley. I have also managed to squeeze in a few other poets from around the world and nearer to home.

Joe Warner

Devon Writers

The genesis of this special issue was a conjunction of two events. One was the recent Liverpool Special and the other "tEXt2002", a festival of writing in the city of Exeter, which runs from 4th-11th, May. The theme of the festival is "place". Therefore it seemed logical to me to have a Nightingale special reflecting the work of poets living and working in Devon. Most poets here have also read their work at our regular "Uncut

Poets" event at the Phoenix Art Centre in Exeter. Our contribution to "tEXt2002" is a special edition on Saturday 11th May at 1.30pm in St Stephens Church on Exeter High Street where our guest will be this years Whitbread Award for Poetry holder Selima Hill. Look us up if you are in the vicinity. Enjoy the read.

James Bell

HELD TOGETHER BY THREADS

1.

Your father lived downstairs, your mother up.
The hall between their flats a no-man's land-
your one respite from her demanding needs
& all that you were frightened of below.

Their hallway was our place to kiss goodnight,
until he came out once to shoo the cat, or
put his empties out, dressed in his frock-
the pink one with the frills; it so reviled you.

Your mother stood upstairs, her curtain raised,
waiting to wave me off, your brother's ghost
behind her eyes. It fell on me to be the son she'd lost.
Downstairs, we froze until he shut the door.

These oddities remain clear; these & your three
kidneys; your sinus-less nose; your uncontrollable
hurt.

2.

The rain is light. Light falls.
A handstroke of sun tans
the sky's western edge.

You sit in the meadow
by a solitary oak-your feet
dipped in a stream of fish

& frogs, your head among
a cloud of flies, crying.
Tears that gleam like acorns.

3.

'Better to be sorry than be safe.
Better to have left you than have stayed.
Better to have loved you, or have tried,
than never to have loved you,' you lied.

'Better to be giving than receiving.
Best to tell the truth than be deceiving.
Best to be alone than be believing
We were made for one another's side.'

'Together, we sang love's chorus.
Loneliness can't do that for us.
Better to have loved you, or have tried,
than never to have loved you,' you lied.

4.

I imagine you've changed little since our thing
in the Great Rift, so far away this morning
as I sit here drinking coffee on the terrace of the café
La Délicieuse.

I imagine you still wear a face any other
man could love. I am tempted to believe, however
briefly, that although there is no antidote,
there's hope-

the feeling that we've lived through this before
& know what's coming next. Your silence is
profound. Still you're
imprisoned

by a world where things are held by threads-
the prince on the princess's hair; Damocles" sword;
all those feelings you never
fully expressed.

5.

I stood before you, lost for words,
the bunch behind my star-lit back.

'Silence, that's what flowers are,' you said,
'or rather, a man's way of silencing.'

by

ANDY BROWN

Andy Brown is a Lecturer in Creative Writing & Arts at Exeter University, and Centre Director for the Arvon Foundation at Totleigh Barton in Devon. He has published three collections of poetry, *From A Cliff* (Arc, March 2002), *The Wanderer's Prayer* (Arc, 1999), *West of Yesterday* (Stride, 1998), and two pamphlets. A collaborative book of poems, *of Science*, was co-written with poet David Morley (Worple Press, 2001). A selection of prose

Sam Smith - Born 1946, West Country based, many day jobs, from psychiatric nurse to presently arcade cashier, to support writing habit. 5 collections, latest 'pieces', K. T. Publications; 9 novels - including a Torbay trilogy, 'Paths of Error', Jacobyte Books. In his spare time he is publisher/editor of The Journal and Original Plus press.

Once

Hair goes grey.
The skin
of the ill and the dead
goes grey.
Weathered board
goes grey.

The child's foot
makes patterns
in the yellow sawdust
on the square red tiles.
The butcher's banter
overlays the smell
of fresh meat
being wrapped
in soft damp paper.

Our desire to care, to protect,
goes beyond death. So do some
get placed in lead-lined coffins,
others receive ornate headstones.
To keep them, keep them safe.

Loneliness Remembered

Like the mystery
of unexplored
public buildings
are the ordinary
secrets of lovers.
Parts of bodies
usually unseen,
smells and noises
and personal histories:
the sort of secrets
which aren't secrets
but which belong to
a time and a bed
shared. Take me in
I asked of strangers.

Passing By

Above the grey pavement,
moss mounding its cracks,
evening light picks out
clustered green-gold seeds
of a tall garden ash.
Spilling out from
a closing pub door
are men's hardened voices
and the smell of beer.

An impossibility,
in an imperfect world,
to perfect oneself.
The wise, therefore,
believe in contradictions,
embrace mixed feelings.

Beyond dark angled rooftops
fawn and pink clouds
make a jig-saw of the sky.

On the ink-blue corner
young men hang about to
practise their spitting.

Unwise
wherever I have so far been
people
have got in the way of the view.

Band of Hope

for Roy Bailey

In my head as I wake
you sing for El Salvador
or the sinking Herald
of Free Enterprise.

Such are the brightness
of your words, they play
in a spume between my
waterbound eyes.

You sing for the bare defenceless
body of the whale
that I must own, to survive
being human on the blood-drenched deck.

My dream works itself
inside the last leviathan
and dives without trace
in your voice.

In my head as I rise
you sing for El Salvador
or the sinking Herald
of Free Enterprise.

Susan Taylor

No Respect for the Cloth

Money built the chapel here,
a tomb and this man's likeness
as splendid as his life.
In death, he wears realistic robes
because he could afford the alabaster.
Because I can afford a pocket knife
I've left the date and my initials
on his ornamental skirt.

And no, I'm not the first:
lovers, children, pickpockets
ran risks to make their marks
even on his passive face.
Alabaster cuts like satin;
sloughs off quiet and quick
before an inconspicuous blade.
Alabaster is a lot like skin.

Steven David**BOUTIQUE GLASS**

In the window on display
the speed of fashion lingers,
on-the-button cuts and shades
become objects of desire.

You might be a better you
if swathed in those clean fibres
and as the magic quickens
you catch your wan reflection.

Take your clothes off then and there
and put them in the window,
bet you that they'd look good too
through the veil of boutique glass

STOOD UP

I met a German woman,
her English better than my French
but we never made our rendezvous,
what a waste of time.

In a cafe, cigarette,
watching the smoke rise.
I was prepared to take the risk
so why she didn't show?

I kept my eyes peeled, open
for her entrance at the door,
her lovely high waxy forehead
and her scuffy blocky shoes

but I don't regret I met her
and I don't regret she never came.
I sat there in my seat
like a unicorn, caffeine speeding.

US

Our words flame like firefighters
above this cafe table top,
a gimlet wink aimed just at me
above this cafe table top,
over and above the lager
I look into your green green eyes
and wish I was a sea horse.

Dante and Beatrice on our hols,
our backsides in formaldehyde.

Sandra Tappenden**DRIVE**

Ray nearly died today.
They gave him oxygen, took him out on a stretcher.
Maybe you can't love someone you don't know
but you can love the idea of them.

If love were a moment
it'd be John Martyn on the jukebox
in a sleazy motorway stop-off during a blizzard;
a smile, egg and chips, fluorescent lights.

If love were a moment
it'd be something to write home about
as if you knew where home was; a postcard in time
to absolutely everyone.

What big trucks we drive.
I never know where to park up and get out;
planning a route assumes you can really choose.
If Ray had died today I'd be older.

MORE THAN A WORK-THING

Smiles come up like trained fish and chatter spills out;
inane work overtime for no extra. It's really all right.
Tineke's arm itches with the fresh tattoo, boredom,
as she fast-forwards out of here and dances all night.

I say "get me a date with that bloke" and mean it
even though I don't mean it. Yes, it's all right.
Hours go quickly like time was new and nothing else.
My face is masked by the promise of pay; so what.

People amaze and horrify; their desires; the goods.
Even though that's not the whole story, it's the visible part.
Something cries out to make sense of such awkward trust.
Times, I swear the smiles come up pure like love.

A small boy is fitting on the floor beside the sales desk;
his mother's purchases scattered on industrial parquet.
Sharon cries and I feel shock resonate. This is it;
we are angels, witnesses, whatever the public want.

Kenny Knight

Resides in Plymouth and is the editor and publisher of the magazine Tremblestone.

Lush Street

Rain falls on Lush Street.
The flowers pull it down.
The windows. The eyelashes.
Pencil thin epics wash
Old sunshine from reptile kitchens.

Clear and torrential magnet drop.
Rain falls on Lush Street.
Falls on Halloween witches heads-
Dripping black mascara gothic blood.

Covens of soggy goat
Skin shoes and needlecraft

On Lush Street

Darkness
Is a soft vice
On our eyes

Inverted clouds gurgle skywax.

Let's dress up for the night
Is a fancy whore and
Lush Street is a thoroughfare
For rainfall and echo

On Lush Street where
Trees breathe in tobacco smoke
And cough out wind.

Storm

Winter rain falls steadily
On the town
A few optimistic seagulls
Hug the fringes of the bay.
Everywhere there's a sense
Of desolate decline.
Shops locked against the wind
Maraca in tandem.

The sun, an unfit weightlifter
Fails to lever itself
Above the wall of cloud.

On the promenade car owners
Take root in their comfort zones
And evolve into televisions.

Only unlicensed madmen
Wildlife, dogs and their pets
Breathe the storm that rattles
Shutters and bones.

The sea rides in on the back
Of itself
Lashes grey on grey on grey.

The vampire wind enraptures flesh
With a set of teeth
Hundreds of miles long.

The crowds have retreated
To wallpaper hell.

Soap

(For Bill And Monica)

The tabloid operatic
Society are in town
Working undercover

Harmonica plays
Washington blues.
Harmonica between
Your lips softly
Blowing.

Dallas meets Dynasty
On Pennsylvania Avenue.

Flashbulb vampires
Undress night.

Sperm on the flag
While America dreams.

The world's a bar
Of soap.

Slippery.

Pull back the bed sheets
And climb inside the news.

REVIEW

Tremblestone
No. 2 March 2001
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£4 including P&P

An eighty page A5 magazine with an intriguing black and white illustration by Frank Sixsmith on the bright yellow cover. This issue includes the work of 19 poets giving us a good taste of their work over several poems, it also includes brief biographical notes for each of the authors. Ten pages of reviews covering 18 magazines published in the UK rounds this issue off.

There was a strong surreal/fantasy element to much of the poetry providing a sense of coherence alongside the essential variety and diversity of the 19 authors. Patrick Gasperini is first up with an extract from a longer work called Silenus, which takes us into a strange world where strong images take precedence over reality -

I slept soundly until something familiar woke me,
A rivulet of radioactive jam was petting my feet.

The strong and original imagery used by many of the poets was something I

particularly liked, none more so than in two poems by Helen Foster -

Until there is only time,
in time to make
dark sweet treacle

(From After Brittany)

They speak quietly and swelter
in the stick jazz
of malignant fruit

(From Durian)

Joe Warner

Emily Bowdler, 13 years

Emily recently started to write, inspired by her mother, Nels Rodwell, who also writes poetry and recently attended the 'Uncut Poets' evening in Exeter,

EXPECTING

I awoke with a feeling
I was drawn down the stairs
The air rushed past my face
I pounced onto the door
It flew open

There she was
In her water pool
With legs spread wide
Birth giving

There was the head
Dark in between
Slowly coming
Panting and heaving

Body turning around
Almost there
Everything nearly out

Big breath in
One last push
Baby almost arrived
Sweat on her face
One new life
To our world

GRASS

Lush shades of colour
Carpet the ground
Among the blunt blades
Buttercups found

Sprinkles of frost
Imprints of feet
Spongy green moss
Smelling so sweet

Watery dew drops
Dried by the sun
White daisies gay
Till summer is done

Long slender shoots
Ripple in waves
Cut to the root
Harvested hay

Nels Rodwell**LEFT**

Did I sleep silently
Through you leaving
Or did the sound of you
Creeping away
Penetrate my mind
Breath held
Expectant
Your voice to say
Goodbye

Did you move past me quietly
Hoping not to disturb my slumber
Without a word of farewell
Till later
The air more cold about me
Told a tale
Your presence missing
A kiss missed my cheek
Blown away by your hand
As you stand by the door

Your eyes upon me
One more time
Before you take your leave
Your warmth around me
My senses grieve

Katy Holderness**OVER THE TOP**

splish splash splish splash
thick gooey slimmey mud
cold wet alone
what have i done
splish splash splish splash
black fat bodies long thin tails
razor sharp teeth bright eyes
rats rats fear
splish splash splish splash
dirty tired hungry
rat a tat tat go the guns
thump thump thump beats my heart
splish splash splish splash
watch your step-over the top
walk-don't run
mind the wire
splish splash splish splash
bullet blood pain
all fall down
sorry mother
splish splash splish splash

The Bullies

Your heart aches emptily as you peer through the mist
They are there again readily raising their fists
You try to avoid them but they will never stop
Whatever you do, try or say, no matter what

Charlotte Hayward

Age Twelve, Lincoln

The Storm

Rugged mountaintops
Like bears in the rain
Looming above
Closing in for the kill
Thunder clashes over head
Lightning strikes from afar
The rain drives down
And the whole world drowns

Priory School's Poetry Master Classes 2002

During January and February The Priory School in Lincoln put on a series of Saturday morning classes in a wide range of subjects for primary school year six children who might wish to attend The Priory next September. About thirty children aged between 9 and 12 years took part in five sessions on various types of poetry - limericks, ballads, haiku, sonnets, performance and rap poems. I taught a couple of these classes and was impressed by the enthusiasm and ideas of the children involved who all arrived well before 9 am each Saturday to take part. The next three pages contain a selection of the poems from the five weeks, plus a some at the end from some of the children already at the Priory.

Joe Warner

Louise Brooks, 10 years

old grey heron
never doubt its crying fear
as it flies away...

Laura Mcleod, 11 years

daisy in the night
smooth silver on its petals
beautiful and white

when I'm in a crowd
I feel so overpowered
and always alone

Paul Mander, 10 years

silver night stars
slow rain making spring
bud and flower

Zoe Manning, 10 years

stormy winter wood
beautiful morning trees sway
leaves twist in cold breeze

Stephanie Ward, 10 years

moon dipped in black
over the wood leaves sway
in silver light

Rebecca Wilson

Yellow, gold and brown
As autumn falls one morning
In time upon the windows
White snow, silver ice and frost
In winter darkness descends.

Ellie Ransom, 11 years

Pens up
Heads down
A, B, C or D?

Questions, answers
Ticking, scribbling
A, B, C or D?

Peeping, sneaking
Just checking!
A, B, C or D?

Maths, English
Geography, no!
A, B, C or D?

Five, six, seven,
eight minutes
A, B, C or D?

A minute peeping
not cheating
A, B, C or D!

Kriss Dunk, 11 years

summer morning
young heron on the horizon -
silver moon

Kirsty Thompson, 11 years

My mother popped in this morning
Dressed in white and black
Instead of her usual bag
She carried a Hessian sack

She had a wicked look
Upon her motherly face
I removed her mask and saw
An alien from outer space
She stole the colour from my hair
And the shine from my shoes
She stole the red out of a rose
And the purple from my bruise.

Matthew Hall, 10 years

old man nodding
a young girl growing
as raindrops fall

Annabelle Arnold, 11 years

I love her in the day
I love her in the night
The way she bounces
And the way she hops
She is cuddly as well as warm
She keeps me company in the winter
So I keep her company
She listens when I come
She comes hopping out
She is two-years old
And I am eleven-years old
She is white with black spots
And I am human

Suzanne Ryan

growing a petal
in to a violet
flowers in full bloom
listen, spring breeze
raindrops everlasting

Lyndsey Walker, 10 years

Autumn – violet flowers glisten
Winter – blue trees glow
Summer – green drops ring

No spring!

Roisin Alldis, 11 years

as frosted snow falls
his hand waves a tearful farewell
he sways with sweet love

Layla Ameen, 12 years

silver raindrops fall
beautiful summer evening
stars fading away

Max Ware, 10 years

Oh how I love thee, bleak white snow
When you can go out to play
The fun you have with snowball fights
And sledging down the hill.
Oh how I love thee, winter
When we put up the Christmas tree
Baubles wobble on the branches
Oh how I love thee, Christmas eve.
When nerves are here,
Wanting Santa to bring our presents,
Oh how I love thee, Christmas day.
When we open family presents
Eat our Christmas turkey
And pull crackers around the fire.

Ami Clarke

red glowing hedges
nodding birds singing all day
flowers growing old

Amy Cox, 11 years

fading snow now spring
winter has disappeared
leaves sway in the wind

Ashton Forster, 11 years

ice pools shimmering
the silver, winter full moon
glows beautifully

delicious fruit sways
light fading breeze of spring
bud sprout sweet

Jasmin Billingham, 9 years

growing a white flower
raindrops listen to dew in the pool
beautiful spring breeze
blowing in the breeze

night petal in spring
daisy in autumn
rain shimmers
in stormy weather

Sarah Rizeq**Ballad of Discovery**

Along the lines
Ten years back
I stood in Egypt
With my rucksack
The start of my great find

This was only the start
Of my great find
A collapsing pyramid caught my mind
Fourteen metres high
Noticed the underground stairs
Who knows where they would lead
Closer to my find?

Hey that's just a pile of bricks
You're an archaeologist
Look for something rich they called
But this is going to be my great find!

Thomas Ravenscroft

There was an old man from Spain
Who ran down a hill in pain
He was really quite insane
So they locked him up in chains
Poor old man from Spain

Danielle Cullen, 9 years

daisy shimmers
on the summer horizon
nodding happily

Kirsty Chalk, 11 years

sweet morning daisy
beautiful summer breeze
standing by blue lake

Eleanor Marchington

Farewell to...

the growing summer,
beautiful one never spoke
in love and in day

autumn shimmers
moon mountain glow over
whisper
autumn shimmers

Harriet Hambly, 10 years

When I look up in the sky
I see the stars above
There is no sign of life
Above or down below
The galaxies are sleeping now
My mind wanders
What is happening up there
A whole new world
I wonder, I wonder
Whatever different creatures
The weird or the norm
I wonder, I wonder
What is out there

Astrid Hardy, 11 years

dark autumn morning
trees sway in cold breeze
raindrops whisper stormy wood

Lauren Teague, 11 years

To Hear The Word

For every plant that thought to die,
Or every plane that fell from sky.
There is one word you have to hear;
"Peace"

For crying thy bed,
For every child that rests their head.
There is one you have to hear;
"Rest"

Far across the distance lay,
A child who often cannot say.
There is one word you have to hear;
"Joy"

All in all, with well be well,
You made the rain that poured and fell.
There is one word you have to hear:
"Love"

To hear each word, to speak the thrill,
Of those who read this poem will.
There is one word you have to hear:
"He will cherish you, far and near"

**Caitlin Todd,
11 Years Priory School**

My First Day

I looked at my watch
My heart was racing
Worried about being late,
Arriving early, My heart pacing!

I'm going to class,
My heart still racing,
Trying not to get lost,
I arrived early,
Should have slowed my chasing!

I'm going to break,
Worried about not making a friend,
I'm now panting,
And that's not how I want to end!

I'm off to next lesson,
But I have no idea how,
My new art teacher is really nice,
And she does not know I can draw mice!

It's near the end of the day now,
And I have to say,
I quite enjoy it here,
And I think I'm going to stay!

**Charlotte Hayward
11 years, Priory School**

Snow sparkles in the lane
The robin hops along in peace
Followed by the hungry eyes
Of a russet fox
Poised and ready for the kill
SNAP! SNAP! SNAP!



**Tom Nellist
12 Years, Priory School**

Snake

Snake sits alone, waiting
Under his rock, he waits for food
Suddenly like a spring he strikes
The small weak mouse,
impaled on his fangs.

The poisoned carcass slides
Down the tight muscled throat
Like a trapped animal being pulled
Into quick-sand, never ending death

The lump that once was a lively,
furry little mouse, now disappears
Like a spaceship being sucked
Into a black hole, never to reappear

The snake again slithers
Back under its rock to wait
For the next unfortunate mouse
To end up on his plate

**Jennie Nash
12 Years, Priory School**

Bored

There is one lesson where I
get particularly bored,
so I start to chat,
to no-one-in-particular:
A pencil with its wooded inside,
and weird hexagonal shape.
A ruler with its measures.
A dispenser with its tape.
Scissors that chop,
and a rubber that rubs.

Robert Belcher

Love isn't just a feeling,
Deep within my heart.
It has to be built,
Not bought by gifts.
But I'll treasure the friendship,
And our love might just grow.
The love we share with our families,
Isn't the same love I give to you.
Family love grows with us
from childhood,
Parental love appears as we hold our
newborn baby.
The love we have for each other,
Can be destroyed with one argument.
So hold on to love,
And treasure it always.

**Christopher Millbank
12 Years, Priory School**

The Forest

Silent all night, but moving so slightly
The sound of the birds and the bats
They chatter like two old ladies
And sing as if in an opera

Then night will come and all will be
revealed

For the birds and the bats
Are not all that's out there
A whole lot more of nature lies beneath

Night has come and all are out
Including the owls and the rats
And that's not all for there's lots more
For day will come tomorrow

Rose Cook

Based in Totnes, Devon, Rose performs her poetry individually and as a member of poetry performance group *Dangerous Cardigans*. She has been published in various magazines, including *The Otter*, *Fat Chance*, *Envoi*, *Psychopoetica*, *Seam*, *South*, *The Interpreter's House*, *Rain Dog* and *Still*.

Fierce Love

If I should deserve it
bring me your fierce love
like the dragonfly that pushed its way
into my kitchen that day and filled
the whole room with its buzzing
and need to breed, fluttering at
the paper dragonfly I keep in the fern
till I lifted it up on my finger
and carried it to the outside air
with its magnificent wings
and its striped angry head
and its muscled legs which trembled
and clung light and trusting to my skin
then flew straight up like
an aquamarine helicopter thief.

Alfie Howard**a few words on divorce**

I had a heap of memories
a store in which to fall
and feast
now I have been barred
I am no longer welcome
& can no longer use
the facilities.

poem for my daughter

she is five, and then she
is six, and in the crackle
of a firework
time has passed and
left me stranded

Ruth Butler**Say it all by Text**

(inspired by news from Kuala Lumpur)

You can date by text-phone.
Can you relate by text-phone?
- handle romantic conversations
in sound-bites, abbreviations
and one-liners;
make cryptic, staccato seductions;
have affairs no more deep
than your patience
when tap, tap tapping on the keypad -

- perhaps you'd develop a penchant
for the ingenious use of words
spelt mostly with A. D. G. J.
M. P. T. W.

OK -
that's a challenge I'll set you.

For marriage you could upgrade
to 3-way video conferencing -
- each of you and a priest
in the comfort of your own homes,
posing "portrait" at your desk
with the digital camera on zoom.
You might like to quickly use a comb,
but no need to polish your shoes
or tidy the rest of the room.

Convenience matrimony.

And if it doesn't work-out,
Yes,
you can divorce by text-phone.
The Mufti of Kuala Lumpur says
that under Sharia Law
Text-message divorce is legit.
Just type "I divorce you" 3 times -
a real quickie, no need to meet.

But have you looked at
I . V . O . R . C .
on the keypad?
It could take all of 3 minutes.
It would be quicker to speak.

Frances Thompson**THE CATCH**

between the thing
and its name

between the word
and its shape

between a thought
and its silence

between the language
and the voice

between the eye
and the object

between one breath
and the next

the catch.

**IN HORA SFAKION,
CRETE**

Like a cat, I wait
for a square of sun.
I move with the day.

My body learns how
to be with itself.
Whiskers would help. Soon

I'll forsake the pier
where I've been dozing
with half of one eye

on the dancing sprats -
I'll stretch, yawn, and slink
between the tourists

to where, already,
the sun is painting
my white balcony.

Shane Wolfand - published in Poetry Manchester, First Offense and Axiom. Co-ordinator of cross-artform group Garret Artists.

No.1 Eclipse

Starlight
Silhouette
Tongue lash lick
Touch to mark
Bite sweet black
Hollows of bone
Moon glints soft
On skin.

Slant eyed
Green-gold
Glisten salt
Featherhand
Burns the skin
Consumed
Blood on blood
To flame.

Curls of jet
White flesh
Shadowed in
Blue half-light
Lip sealed
Tiny blood-marks
On rose quartz-
Coloured silk.

Silver chains
Entwine
Eclipse
To union-ring
The sacred fire of
Blaze
Made to belong
One to the other.

No.2 Crystalnacht

Fractious the fracture
Faceting the glassware
Sharding the crystal
A cobweb of shatter lines
Like the most fretwork
Of networks.

Splinter glass
In brittle flinders
Smash to pieces
The transparent tracery
Razor sharp and filigree
A lacing of frost
Or the ice, starcrossed.

The shivered image
Refracted
To a thousand shard lights
Or pin points
Dazzling the eye
And leaving an imprint

- Like your arrow
Through the mirror -
The surface that held
And exchanged each image
Each most elusive of

Glancing thoughts,
Thoughtful glances
One to the other
Placed around it.

That ideal globe
You turned from
With never a glimpse
Backward -

Do you see the lights
Reflected on
The bricks ahead?
Or did the crystalnacht
Leave you blinded?

No.3 Black Angelis

Copper trees
Black angelis with
Golden trumpets
The white stone
Against black wood.

Here once more
In the time of
Shades and hazy gold.
The red splash
Leaves like dried blood

On yellow, on green -
Dreamfire.
Land's sacrifice to
The god of Winter
Who takes the shed blood

And the harvest of berries.
The sun glows and
Fades - tints of the flaxen
Touches of scarlet
Like paint on glass.

A presence
Eyes of the wolf, lurid
A daemon in wake
Play of shadows against the colour
To set the essence on celestial fire.

No.4 Fugue in 3 Angles

This cruelty is stillborn.
It has all the dream-quality
Of an electric light-bulb.
Flaring at blue-ship harbours
In the mornings of
Tower-block kitchens.
It has all the intimacy
Of an addiction.
I do not feel it.
It does not surface in me,
Thank God
But originates in you.
In London's clay, cardboard facade.

This place is somewhere else;
With its dragon skies
Film-set mists and
Opaque suns.
It is not for communication
Or isolation amongst many.
It is as where you are from.
Bright, bold and

Bloody in its contempt
For cities.

That place where you are from...
Streams running endless
Like schemes inside my head.
Pinnacles, reachable without
Straying too far from the road:
Like being with you.

And in the absence of malcontent prodigies,
What have we here?
Could it be love in another form?
- Or just another
Geometric shape?

No.5 Treasure & Monsters

On a dark bright day
In the howling gale,
I come across the treasure -
Piles of it, heaped,
Open to the sky,
Some broken,
Much whole
And finely wrought,
Like walking on the walls
Of a shell-house.

I tread amongst the glass and jewels,
Till suddenly out of nowhere
Comes the rushing of the guardian -
Engrossed and enchanted
By the hoard,
I had forgotten about
The monster,
And step back,
Run back,
As it stretches out long arms
Of icy cold to drench me.

Whipped by the wind-cords,
Something ripples and rises,
Till the sand-snakes
Tendril and slither
With a hissing sound,
Conjured like fire,
Over the shore,
Meeting a man in black.

He walks as if
Through geometry
Or cyberspace,
He walks like
One in a sand-storm.

The fire wind serpents
Meet the ocean monster
And the battle commences,
White flecks skimming from the
Arms of the beast,
Where the gold dry fire
Meets the silver cold spray.

The man in black
Seems to walk into water
Vanish into the sand,
And then, like a mirage,
Is gone...

James Bell**DUSK**

There is still daylight
 reflecting on the water
 though this will change
 soon to orange lights
 beginning to glow
 on the bridge where
 the starlings are making
 their daily cacophony
 as they prepare to roost
 underneath the old stone
 arches while ducks feed
 on the seeds on the shore
 and seagulls flap and wash
 their wings in fresh water.
 The day is on the turn,
 and as every bird here knows
 all will soon be still
 and silent as only people
 continue into the night
 and cross the bridge above.

AT THE RIVER RIM

Glowing silver today,
 the water low - tide out - a concave hub
 dug out of the earth through time.

Bank mud with a slight, silky texture
 the water has moulded in womanlike curves,
 soft, though still could be adamant.

A static heron stands
 in the shallow, slow flow -
 struck with serious purpose - fishing.

Swans glide, own
 the way downstream; aloof royalty
 taking up their rightful position.

Snipe potter on the muddy edge, thin
 clawprint trails in and out the river -
 theatrical business in apparent stillness.

Transient anger is displaced -
 gone by the time it takes
 a fish to die and a heron eat.

You can see and feel cold rime in the head
 when the river flows, when it tricks sometimes,
 floods other days.

A temporal calm belays the storm
 of affairs at the river rim -
 while we try to build a bridge between both shores.

PREPARED FOR FISHING

We sit and wait, watch in silence
 for the tide to lift our boat
 whose bottom still bumped the river bed
 when water laps its sides
 too vigorously.

While we watch, ready in waders,
 our orange net heaped
 at the boat's stern, the river birds
 wait too for food to flow
 below in the water.

Together on the bank side we all wait
 focussed on how this place
 provides us who are prepared, watch
 as the sun bends towards dusk
 and take our turn.

Paul Davidson**HONEYS**

(for Scott and Kiera H.)

Here, where pines move from dusk to dusk,
 where hills run silently to bracken;
 where stones dream, and seaweeds
 tell the tide's time; here,

for the first time in however many months,
 our shadows have come to cross; mine
 accelerating to some greater dark,
 yours' still turning slowly.

You are both too young to tell time,
 or language in all its ebb and depth,
 though you will soon grow into this.

For now, all our words
 for you are incoming ripples,
 dandelion seed, unnoticeably settling.
 Your own clocks are growing
 almost out of pace with you.

In this place, where the sea
 reveals its secrets in stages,
 where we will cross again from time
 to time, in snatches like the flight
 of angels or oystercatchers,
 you will learn the words for life
 and how to walk within its meanings.

You will also learn, at length, to step,
 like me, towards the dark,
 under pine and under stone,
 pursued by the winged dead,
 your own bright days.

James Turner**Easeful**

"Not to be here,/Not to be anywhere,/And soon;
nothing more terrible, nothing more true." - Philip
Larkin

Office, Tesco, hospital bed...
malfunction of the heart or head,
liver or kidney, lung or gut...
the where and why have faded but

when people ask you how I died,
just mention all the ends untied.
So unprepared! - yet I succeeded,
lawn unmown and beds unweeded,

floors unhoovered, rent unpaid,
dirty pants on, will unmade,
depths unplumbed and heights unscaled.
It wasn't a test or I'd have failed.

"Nothing more terrible" - Larkin said it.
Tell them he was wrong to dread it
(he knows that now), and then add this:
dying's a doddle. Piece of piss.

Haiku

wasp on window ledge -
two tired antennae conduct
symphonies of rain

Svetlana Bjelica

1
piano and softly
clouds are passing
ozone traces

2
lilac in blossom
stays with wind
on lawn

3
butterfly
is seeking shadow
hot summer noon

M. C. Newton**I was on the way to Wells**

I was on the way to Wells, not all that long ago,
when the word I was searching for appeared on the grass verge:
a slighter word than I'd imagined it.

I knew this was the word I needed, even though
I'd caught no more than a suggestion of its size and shape
as we drove past.

When I looked back, I couldn't see it anywhere,
but the poplars on the bank were real enough,
with their shadows stretching out across the grass.

Bogoljub T. Mihajlovic

1
spring morning
and look toward a hill -
cranes are returning

2
down the slopes
tonight, together
the moon and the river

3
on a dried branch
the orange moon
has moved into its nest

1
proleć jutro
I pogled ka bregu
vraćaju se žralovi

2
niz padinu
noćas su zajedno
mesec I reka

3
na suhu granu
narandžasti mesec
u gnezdo se uselio

Tomislav Ž Vujčić

bitter storm -
the dogs stopped barking
in the village

jaka oluja -
u selu
presta lavež pasa

Christine M. Kirker

flashing neon sign
peep shows cheap blows a good time
dad says evening grace

endless giggling
children playing at the park
a mother yawning

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Dream Catcher costs £5.95 or £15 for three issues (inc. P&P). For further information call Paul Sutherland on 01522 882238

David Lightfoot**After The Music**

“And, apart from *The Bible* and Shakespeare,
one book?” Impossible choice but,
like *Sophie’s Choice*, you’d let your instinct rule.
If, from a house-fire, you had only one
fraught chance in which to snatch some favourite clear,
which would it be? What value would you put
on leather-bound *World Classics* won at school
or names the Booker Judges smiled upon?

That first edition? No. the one your dad
bought you the day you passed the scholarship?
Perhaps, but, sentiment aside, you’re glad
to grab the hardback which first let you dip,
by means of magic words and talking mice,
shy fingers in the pools of paradise.

Politicians

and others like them like philosophers
are dirt to some but others like them
and philosophers, love them or hate them,
like politicians, like talking.
Such types of thinker, types the unthinking typist,
it’s kind of unkind to class as careless.
Neither cares less who cares about
who thinks their careful enough
to be thought to care for their country.
Country bumpkins couldn’t care less even more,
being certain certain certainties
are not, clearly, as clear cut
as philosophers, qua philosophers
like politicians, qua politicians,
like to assert,
being both thought dirt by some,
though others unlike them
like them, thinking
Who’d be a politician?

Kevin Blake

I live in the colony of a parasitic thief.
In the shadow of a professional fanatic.
In the tongue-tied mouth of a monster.
In the history of it’s lying teeth.

I live in the warzone of a waking thought.
In the life of ritual decomposition.
In the relentless chaos of a fly’s mind.
In the fusing of its intellect.

I live with the uncertainty of no religious tongue.

Yet

I hold the pliable sky between thumb and forefinger, and
Pray with fury.

Jack Galmitz

Outside City Hall
Leaves are beginning to form -
We take wedding vows

Summer in New York -
A clerk shakes a paper weight
Snow begins to fall

Periwinkle shells
Stranded on the office desk -
The sea within

Cold morning -
Petals of the primrose
Opened

Reflections on Noise (free verse)

Soun -
one word
may be too much.

Noisome silence
runs backwards down your spine,
bottle stopper.
When to be done with words,
even one letter too many?

Strike words
before they strike you;
old bamboo breaks when bent.

Gary Blankenship**Two Haiku**

I cull my keys
listening to Django -
nightfall in autumn

mackerel sky
wiping the dog shit
in the tall grass

Mark Brooks**Unvanquished (nautilus)**

Low
sun
finds a
tar paper
shack, by the train track,
slumped one day deeper in debris.
As day fades, slowly umber shadows swing and taper.

At last, the day star sends a shaft of light from bright decline,
through the shack's encrusted windows, in rainbow-tinted shine.
The sills are filled with bottle glass, crowded against the panes,
placed there by the resident, discards from passing trains.
No rose-windowed cathedral boasts colors half as fine.

Passengers, in passing, pity his decrepit home.
They can't see the place's glory,
nor his vital spark,
nor how he
beats back
the
dark.

Denis Garrison**WHC The Bridge****Let Age... (pantoum)**

They happened while sleeping,
hieroglyphs on my face;
as the shadows were deepening,
someone else took my place.

Hieroglyphs on my face:
I'm not long for this earth,
someone else took my place,
someone born at my birth.

I'm not long for this earth,
someone else took my place,
someone born at my birth
who looks out of my face.

Someone else took my place,
... I fall out of time,
she looks out of my face
and this flesh is not mine.

Christine Bousfield**Scifiku (1-breath)**

cramped quarters - - your head in mine

Terrie Leigh Relf**Inspiration (mirror cinquain)**

Bright bolts
crackle and arc
from inner thunderheads;
illuminated by the flash of "if,"
we dance
and pray
for paper, canvas, strings to blaze,
for breath to spread the sparks,
for night to burn
away.

Stephen Clay Dearborn

On the way she enlists the services of an Aboriginal tracker named Billy, who is also marked by trauma from his own violence-filled past. Set in 1825, Clare, a young Irish convict woman, chases a British officer through the rugged Tasmanian wilderness, bent on revenge for a terrible act of violence he committed against her family. On the way she enlists the services of an Aboriginal tracker named Billy, who is also marked by trauma from his own violence-filled past.