



**DIY
POETS**

**WE'RE
NICE,
WE'RE
ONLINE
AND WE
DON'T
ALWAYS
RHYME**

**DIY
POETS**

51

(ONLINE)

**THE
FREE
POETRY
MAGAZINE**

Graham Lock:

Dusty

I think of Dusty Springfield, ever the perfectionist.
When the cancer came back, she rang her friend
in a panic:

'I'm going to die and I don't know how to do it —
I've never done it before.'*

No rehearsal, no second take;
we must improvise our ending as best we can.

Shall I count the ways?
O, there are infinite ways to die,
each as singular and perplexing
as a snowflake or a shooting star.
We watch them fall, then weigh our options,
though we doubt they'll make a difference.
At the end, all exits are open,
but there is no easy way out.

* Quoted in *'Dancing with Demons:
The Authorised Biography of Dusty
Springfield'* by Penny Valentine
and Vicki Wickham
(Coronet Books, 2001).





Clare Stewart:

Putting out Birdfood

The spitting icy flakes
and slippery paths
are keeping us indoors.

The birds are self-isolating
locked down by snow
hiding in their little places.

The fat and fighting
bully squirrels
have cocooned themselves.

And the command
'Stay at home'
imprisons us.

Hazel Warren

Water's Flow

Happily bouncing from rock
to water's edge and back
I flow through this place

How the rain fills me up
as I carve my way
through this landscape
since time began
since I began
since forever, and ever,
and ever, and ever

Birds hop between the lower branches
their calls drowned by my incessant babble
they watch, and wait, and try to dry their feathers

Fish swim within me
with my flow, or against it
dependent on instinctual desire

At times like this, no people come
just peace, and wet-green joy
but today, there are two
happily trudging in kagools
weaving their way through this landscape
one following the other
since their day began
since time began
and forever and ever, and ever,
and ever, and ever

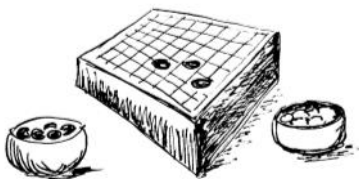
Frank McMahon

Lying Awake at 4am Blues

As I lie awake at night, 4am,
I google who would win a fight
Between the Hulk and Superman
Or the Thing and Spiderman,
A lion and a tiger
Crocodile or alligator
Triceratops v T Rex.

Some fights are close,
But in the battle between me and sleep
There's no contest.





Andrew Martin:

Ready, steady

Masahiro Hara contemplated the grid,
structured lunchtime leisure
punctuated workday routine,
ancient game of strategy,
black and white stones,
countless possibilities .

Masahiro mused on colleagues,
company ethos, eternal limitations of
barcodes' stripes.

His daily game of Go,
time and space for reflection,
ignited a flash of inspiration,
illuminated the smooth, dark and light stones.

Squares and strategy,
sparks for QR codes,
universal in the age of Covid.

WD Golding:

Love is as Smoke

With honesty I tell you,
I understand little of Earthly temples.
But one thing I know;
Love is as smoke.
Erebus' ally,
A cloud to clear sense,
For Sense's sake.

This product of heart and hearth,
She moves about us.
Within us.

Listen learner. I have felt it;
there's no smoke without fire.
She'll have your soul for a tinder box,
and take hold deep within.
Burning.

Bright or cold; no matter.
Smoke's scent will linger in breath and hair,
Recklessly leaving her dark trail there.
A husk or whole you'll feel;
ever washing your skin in whisky.
A silent charade to recall so sweetly,
that smoke which you willingly breathed so deeply.



Tom Ryder:

Upon Seeing Millais' 'Speak! Speak!'

Ne'er did I see a picture's rare mystique
Nor let my mind ponder the subject's pain,
Until I viewed Millais' 'Speak! Speak!'
And wondered long about the Roman's bane.
O why that look of longing on his face?
And why that look of sadness in her eyes?
Is she really there? And why that wheyface?
In spirit or in truth I thus surmise:
I like to think his Love has found her way,
That what love was before it still remains,
But if 'spirit', the Lady means *vale*,
If 'truth' methinks their former love retains:
 Whiche'er, enough of guessing lovers ends
 For without words at worst they part as friends.

Rosemarie Harvey:

Fleeting Fleece

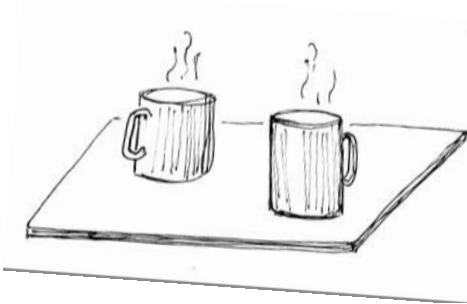
Your old, grey cardigan
With its portly curve
Packs a punch.

A sudden desire
To be enveloped in cosiness.

Your warm kitchen
You cooking.
Us laughing.

The fleeting fleece brings
A pang for times gone.

Layers of longing,
Mingled with hopes
Of cosy times to come.



Barbara Schaeffer:

brightest moment
flow before beyond
- my life

clock:
a brief
moment listen
adds to my time
silence

structure:
my heart held
I reach out -
beyond world beyond me





**Gail Webb:
Daily Bulletin**

At the chemist today I have to queue,
Cold wet hands slither in pockets, turn blue
I am searching for a scrunched up face mask
To cover confusion, help with this task

The usual chatter is smothered here
No chance to chat in the open- air blur
Some brave soul asks, *Did you hear what they said
Last night's briefing truly made me see red!*

We stand and listen to space in between
Gaps open up, huge fissures noted, seen

Without talking it is well understood
None of this makes sense, if only it would

John Humphreys:

Where we came and rested

For St Kilda and other remote places

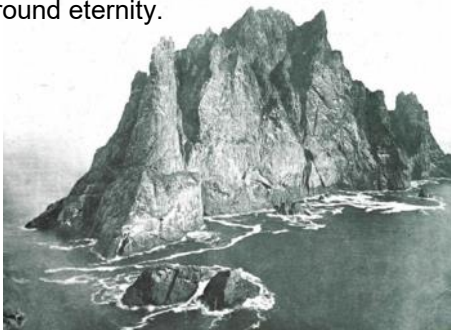
Take me to the edge of the world,
to the sooner sky,
where rocks skewer gulls and shake the heavens.

Where the skirt of the sea hymns the air
with ancient swell, whoosh and roar.
Where the wind's notes invest the mist and sun
with longing and music.

tha e an seo gu bheil mo chridhe a 'laighe
(It is here that my heart rests),
in these forever places.

Where the hardy held these shores awhile,
came and rested,
left the ruins of community as ghosts,
footnotes in the land and our imagination.

Like a drop in the ocean of time,
that turned in its surge
to fold its arms around eternity.





Laura Slack:

Glory of Nature

The tree looms over me
The branches dance in the breeze
Lit up by the moonlight
Bringing me to ease

For nature is beautiful
Full of positive things
The scurrying of a squirrel
The birds beginning to sing

For morning has broken
The sun does arise
The owls now retreat
They hoot their goodbyes

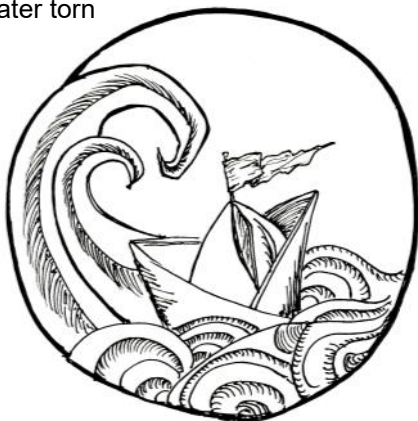
Kevin Jackson:

Crossing over

Boat no bigger than matchbox
drunk on the up and down
crammed with bones like matches
all cold not quite spent
hope kept close of new beginnings.

Numbness resounds as waves
or shells exploding
strange exclaiming music
new beginnings
each wound in any scraps of belief
they still possess
close eyes against the sickening.

New beginnings
water from water torn
descending.





**DO YOU WANT TO MEET OTHER
POETS? SHARE YOUR WORK? GET
THE CHANCE TO PLAN EVENTS?
PERFORM YOUR WORK?**

**DIY Poets are a Nottingham based
poetry collective, with a mission
to bring poetry to the masses.**

**We aim to make poetry accessible
to readers, and give opportunities
and encouragement to writers
and performers.**

**DIY poets meet regularly to share
works, give and receive friendly
constructive feedback and plan
events.**

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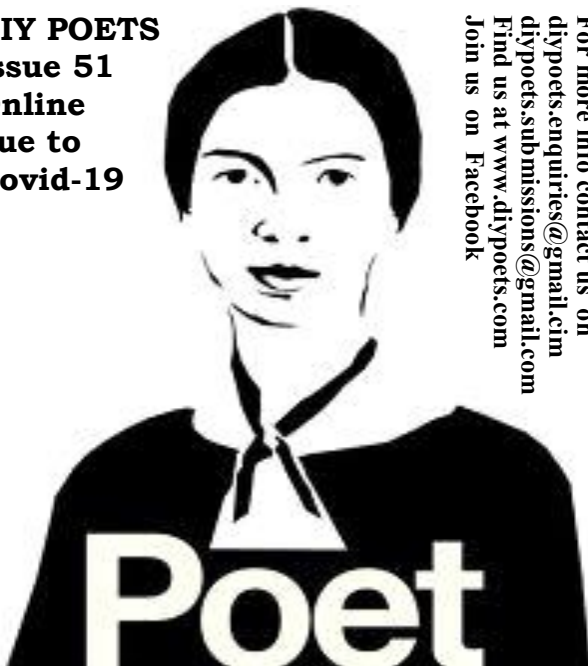
We are currently open for submissions for issue 52. Poems can be on any theme. The only stipulation is that they are short (25 lines or less) to fit onto a page of A6. Your poem may be brilliant but if its as long as Paradise Lost then it won't get in.

The deadline for submissions is 15th April 2021.

Send poems to diypoets.submissions@gmail.com

We welcome original artwork to accompany your poem

DIY POETS
Issue 51
Online
due to
Covid-19



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