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**THE
FREE
POETRY
MAGAZINE**



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

Wick and wire

Despair and fear articulate jaw
muscles cursing dark forces
taking lives, liberties,
malevolent energy and black holes
consuming every emotion, and more,
when religious freedoms and rights
to education are abused, denied,
by one or many, the state.

Yet what matters is not dark,
whilst a candle scented with hope
cries tears of hot impermanence,
a short wick hosts orange flickers,
radiant reds, encircled by barbed wire.

The eye embraces illumination,
a clear mind for change, a dirty cell wall,
waxing and waning silver coin
casts sliver of belief on the tally of months,
your bar code for release.

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Ash

Cavernous, warm, cabled front
winter jumper grey in tone.
Wind a neck scarf, blaze of red
shields against the day to come.

Which reminds me of the way
we placed the blanket, squares
of woollen soft memories bonded
to each other, the rise and fall
of her breath

The hook fumbles in my fingers
She guides me with her saucer
of patience, cigarette poised in
her mouth. The length of ash
is a marvel till it spills

One day I find the hook
in the ancestral knitting bag
rippled orange and brown stripes,
home-made. Smoke curling on
a tightrope of ash, a blaze
of red as she draws and puffs.



Andrea Lucy-Hirst

Half A Night In

Do you feel like half-a-night in?
Is a quiet one beckoning?

Have you burned the candle twice?
Both ends at once, double as nice.

Now you are feeling the effects
of no time to sit and reflect.

Oh yes, it is great to be out,
meeting friends, drinking ale, no doubt.

All sorts of events to attend,
your presence required again.

When you are out every day,
it runs late before you can say

I really need a half night in,
feet up on the chair, drinking gin.

This gadding about takes its toll,
it is not that much fun at all.

A whole night in would be too much,
resting on my laurels and such.

Let's go fifty- fifty with glee.
Half-a-night-in it is for me.

Gail Webb

Glam

In the 70s brawny brown glum,
Glam was needed,
As hippy hair receded,
Or so I'm told
As I'm not quite old enough
To remember three day weeks,
And three TV channels
On black and white TVs,
Ziggy Stardust among Cortina rust.

I'm imaging the jukebox
Playing *Mama We're All Crazy Now*
As the barman pours Ansell's Mild.
If you were feeling flush,
You could *Get It On*,
Do the *Ballroom Blitz*,
With Watney's Party Seven
Though all drinking stopped at 11.

Frank McMahon



He returned home suddenly, coming back to the house in Stratford Place and saying, "I must go", because in walking over Primrose Hill he had come upon a violet.

Arthur Symons
FOR JOHNNYO

He must go
give him the big heave-ho
say Taylor & Co
the poetry is not selling
call the police and let them know
there's a madman loose on the hill
and let them hear how the primrose blows:
lock him up!
O call them
O tell them
O let them know
say you just heard
this year's first violet
scream.

Tom Ryder



My keyboard taps loud

My life on shuffle,
My head in the past,
My socks half off,
My changeling is a fox,
My wings have holes,
My eyes have crows,
My knees are antiquities.
My book missed a page,
My default is rage,
My keyboard taps loud,
My tongue is sound,
My outside is rough,
My courage is bluff.

John Humphreys



Daffodils

I wandered lonely on my own,
in Pandemic times it's all that's allowed.
And then near Tesco's all wind-blown,
a host of golden daffodils – a crowd!
No social distancing for them on the edge of the road.
No thoughts of the future – no fear of being mowed.

Continuous as golden sequins on a ball gown,
curtsying and dancing in the morning light.
No worries for them, no cares or frown.
Just a cheerfulness swathe shiny and bright.
Tossing their yellow heads as they gaily laugh.
What better sign of spring than a bunch of daffs?

The road beside then busy with traffic.
Pedestrians walking; admiring the views.
I wish I could better describe, be more graphic.
A poet ought to be able to describe those lemon hues.
I gazed and gazed and had a ponder,
about flaxen daffs as I had my wander.

For oft, when on my sofa I doss,
mind wandering and feeling mellow.
I recollect those blonde heads that toss,
that Tesco host of daffs so yellow.
And then my heart soars with glee,
as I think of all those Narcissi.

Joy Rice

Sofa Speedway

Behind a tin of curdled magnolia
and the piercing scratch
of box on beam
tickling long untasted musk,
little models of old Ferraris
gather dust in a Dixons bag,

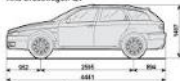
battered and scratched
from epic duels
around the Sofa Speedway,
disputed photo finishes
and engine roars the envy
of a Hollywood movie.

Sam the koala
would drive the F40
and Michael the panda
the Testa Rossa,
always the underdog,
but always on his bumper,

as I increasingly
cancelled races
for the latest console releases,
until classics were consigned
to a plastic scrapyard
to silently await
their former glories.

Martin Grey

Alfa Crosswagon Q4



What is in a name?

I have never met a Hannah that I did not like,
Rebekahs always come in threes, usually with a
Mike.

Jessicas I can take and leave them, much the same as
a Jane.

Barrys will always have your back, but never trust a
Wayne.

Pandromic names are all the same and make for love-
ly people,
saying their names is just the same, they are always
smooth as treacle,

I have never met a Bob, Ada, Arora, Viv or Otto that
was not truly splendid,
but don't ask me about Boris, Matt or Michael unless
you want to be offended.

Stuart Whomsley

Stargazer

A moment forgotten and memorised,
up-down, West-East, beauty-beast: Polarised.
He seized up. He gazed up – unbelieving,
wishing to fix her, stop her from leaving
his orbit. He stared, none too discretely,
and she glanced down then strode on hurriedly
like riding to rescue on a sinking causeway,
hitching up her red skirts and galloping away.
A long green coat and raven hair flailing behind.
Him, grey garbed and grey haired, remaining – unde-
fined.

She is, years on, essential, ascended,
celestial, in the foreground.
He was, still, optional, earthbound, blended
and grounded into the background.

Vermillion and graphite.
Meteoroid and meteorite.

(Pete Clavin)

Orange

How wonderful this fruit is with it's deep orange glow,
Shining out bright from the top of the bowl.
Bringing in sunshine to the dimly lit room
Lifting our mood in the cold, wintry gloom.

The near round fruit, with a cool, waxy skin,
I can feel the dimples coming out and going in.
Brought up to my nose an instinct so old
The tangy scent of blossom, that still remains bold.

Turning it in my hands, too good to resist,
My nails dig in deep, the peel gives off a hissy mist.
Sweet, perfumed oil, is released from the zest,
Promising the taste of citrus, once it's undressed.

As the rind comes away in one long, twisty bit,
A smile of delight comes quick to my lips.
I can now see the segments of fruity goodness,
Under veils of thin membrane, just like a promise.

Giving in to taste, I put a piece on my tongue,
The juice escapes easily, tastebuds overrun.
Such exotic delights fill my senses with scent,
These moments of eating seem so very indulgent.

The super fresh bits easily pop into my mouth,
So wonderful and tangy, without any doubt.
How fortunate I am that there are no pips hid inside,
I can enjoy this whole fruit, full of natural sunshine.

Sue McFarlane



I will, born again
Like such a moss that grows wild
No flower, just green

Alma Solarte-Tobon

Gathering Place

Cherry tree, May's tree, playground tree
girl's school gossip spot
coconut ice confetti blown down in gusts
12 years old; wishing ourselves older
under its heavy branches, hanging out
best friends, Lisa, Linda, Lynn, and me
its satin bark shared our secrets
taken from TV the night before,
vital mysteries we've forgotten;
the school's still there; playground locked
and petals blow around in gusts

Jill Simpson



Hair

My hair has a mind of its own
My mind is having a bad hair day
My thoughts are rather woolly
But it keeps my head warm

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We are currently open for submissions for **issue 54**. 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 October 20th 2021

Send poems (text or short video content) to

diypoets.submissions@gmail.com

DIY POETS
Issue 53 also
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