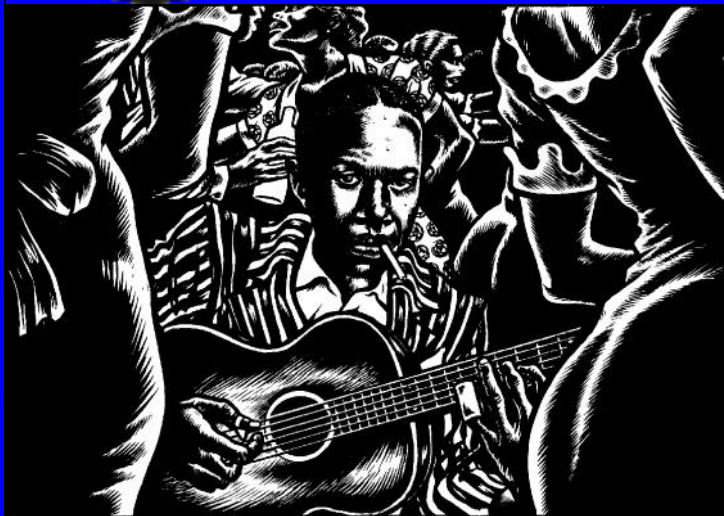




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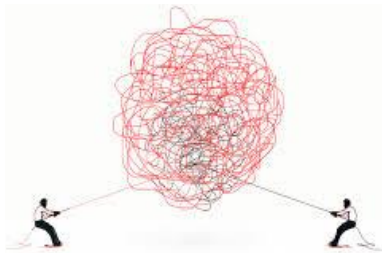
**THE
FREE
POETRY
MAGAZINE**



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

YOU AND ME

I won't pretend to like you
Because you're black or white
I do not need to balance
What is or isn't right
It's up to you to show me
What kind of man you are
To offer trust and friendship
Will help us both go far
I do not need reminders
Of history that was wrong
You do not have to goad me
To help us get along
We both just have to notice
Help others notice too
How trust and understanding
Enlighten me and you
Today is all that matters
Tomorrow holds the key
Unlocking all the doorways
Still keeping you from me
© **Don Holmes**



Sky Not Blue

Sky blue festival of running, Coventry,
At least the logo was sky blue,
As on the day, wind and rain,
Bulleting down on me.
But this was a city
Drenched in bombs
but recovered and rebuilt.
Surely I could get through
With some water falling on me.
A city rebuilt,
Did I feel guilt
Over my little deprivation?
It was no monsoon
I'd be finished well before noon.
Things weren't brilliant
But then I thought of Coventry
Being resilient.
On my run the only thing that died,
Was my phone.

Frank McMahon



Poem

At first make it personal,
Indeed, make it first person.
Do not labour your poem,
So, make it fit one page.
In its writing you
should unveil yourself,
avoid clumsy metaphor
but include memory.
Do not make it even in
its metre, and make sure
everything seems real.
There should be at least one
horrific reference.
Finally include an animal
almost incidentally,
but key to everything.

John Humphreys

Fresh Sundae

Skin once smooth alabaster
melts in the heat like vanilla ice- cream;
cherry red lips pop, deconstructed,
sprinkled stars, eyes emerging,
topped with lashes, flattering, seducing,
slipping onto hot cheeks, mascara slides,
lashings of sauce disappearing, consumed.
A crackled glass flute, strains to contain
the year-on-year Knickerbocker Glory indulgence,
a classic dessert in need of overhaul.

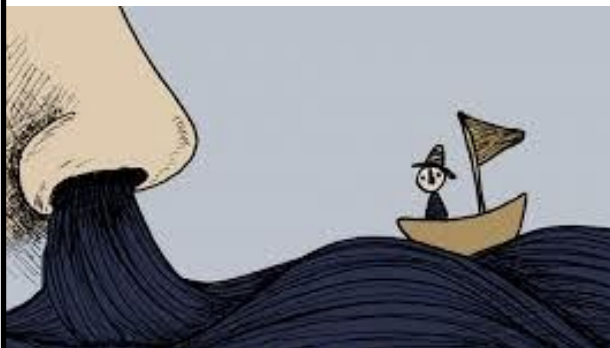
Gail Webb



Nasal Drip

Nasal drip streamlined for minimum drag
Breaks free
Held taut by surface tension
Falls like Newton's apple onto my lap
Where it morphs into trouser
Slips between the threads
Fulfilled.

Martin Dean



Amanda

You climbed public expectation,
a theatre, Joe's inauguration,
absent wings caressed
your wandering words,
poetic exaltation,
your world-stage blessed,
pandemic presence,
inspired exhalation.

Virus versus us, verses
call and carry your collection,
where printed pages capture
the chaos of contagion, project
the personal, the universal.

Pandemic preserved in poetry,
when all the words ever written
are not enough.

© Andrew Martin, December 2021



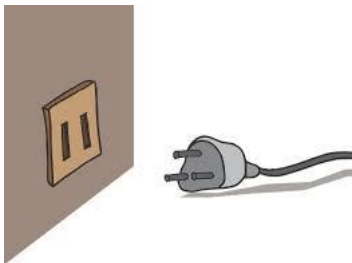
After Harry Baker

we never seemed to add up
to amount to anything much
the sum of apples plus oranges
in some unfamiliar base

I was all odd fractions
with different denominators
half of this, three quarters of the other
you were Roman numerals
in chiselled capitals
all V's and I's and X's

and that's just what we became
when our number was up
we were nothing like compatible
we just did not add up

Vron McIntyre



response to list poem by Catherine Pierce

My anger is the size of a burning garlic clove
spitting itself out of the frying pan
My anger is the size of a silent whistle,
the size of a sickle slicing air
My anger is the size of the blindfold I
couldn't remove until it was too late
My anger is the size of a baby
betrayed by every ticking clock
My anger is the size of a crying pig
waiting for the slaughter of time
size of the reflection of a woman standing at the mirror
forgetting why she stands there
My anger is the size of a water tower at the edge of town,
Its potential energy unspent, pending, pounding, confounding
My anger the size of the years spent lost in my own dreams
the size of a forest fire raging across California,
Australia and the Amazon
the size of a spinning black hole—
there's never enough help for life on this planet

Alexandra Coates



Poets write in their own time

Poets write in their own time
Keeping to their own time.

Some tell of times before time
Some tell of times after time

Some tell of any time
Some tell of no time

Some sequence time
Some dart through time

Some ignore time

Some poems are dated
Some poems are timeless

Poets write in their own time
Keeping to their own time.

By Rosemarie Harvey 07.10.21

(world poetry day)

Directions

Look west – in some gloom of whiteness –
taken all to heart – loveliest who did delight –
do not forget – here love ends – or so it seems –
at the nub – rivers lost – forests cling filmed, set aside
crow rattling the air – thin air, thin as a finger
circling a wine glass with no more song in it –
familiar landscapes
wiped away – day become the noon of night –
will you stretch a hand to me where darkness
roars? – stark as a stopped clock
the dragonfly
hangs, a thread from a fragile sky – inarticulate,
ours hang too – or ascend –
and ascend – returned to ourselves – perhaps

Kevin Jackson



Power of the Other – influenced by Francesca Beard

This mind stalls and dithers
a confused satnav
'Recalculating route.'

It swims along your mistake,
not believing you'd be wrong.
I am made lost by the certainty of your step
your choice of path.

Leave me in a layby
to consult a paper roadmap
Give me time
not to waver
shilly-shally
and this mind will take me
to the woods, to the trees
to the sea and shimmering sky
To Anywhere.

Clare Stewart
December 2021



you know that it is the wind that will kill me in
the end
because I will try follow it until I've
trodden on the soil of the corner of the earth
and I drop right down its cold side
in the penultimate breath
of a bitter body of mine
you know that i will be death in the end and we
can meet up in the
other land
where there is no breeze at all where the street-
lights
never have a need to turn on in the first place
where
we can sit back together again and
bless this stagnant air, following
the morning prayer of two atheists
sat side by side (singing)

Blossom Hibbert

there is no more dying left to do today
nature has sort of undone its waist coat and let out a
great big sigh
of relief that sits nicely
in that space between lunch and dinner
in that space where everything swells and expands
into what was, what is –
(and what could be later on)
comfortably resting back in the armchair
comfortably sipping on something hot
i exist mostly in the wind blowing beyond
where my mind can really imagine i look out of the
window and i see the eyes of the trees
glancing back at me
i think (again) to dying wildlife and wonder if we
are all done for today
are we all done with the dying for today,
or is there more left to do

Blossom Hibbert





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frankmac_1999@yahoo.co.uk**

We are currently open for submissions for **issue 56**
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 30th April 2022 Send
poems to:

frankmac_1999@yahoo.co.uk

DIY POETS
Issue 55 also
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