



Curated
by:
Lucinda
Misiewicz
English
Teacher

MAYFIELD POETRY PLEASE

Anthology of poems written between January and June 2022

Mayfield Poetry Please

Mayfield Poetry Please

An Anthology of Poetry written by Mayfield staff and pupils January to July 2022
Edited and curated by Lucinda Misiewicz (SLM) (English Teacher)

FORWARD:

I have always written derivative poetry for special school occasions, often using elements of teaching to assist with exam advice and revision. I have also always loved poetry and enjoyed the creative freedom that arises when writing poetry. The idea for Poetry Please came after listening to a Radio 4 broadcast of their Poetry Please programme on a drive back from West Sussex in early January 2022 wondering what school was going to be like with many staff off with Covid. Most of the contributors talked about how poetry affected them and encouraged them to expound their own feelings at times of challenge. I decided to start up a writing programme encouraging all to participate. Each half term was to be dedicated to either a theme or a style. January/February was 'Words and Me'; March/April was 'Sonnets' and the summer term was 'Jubilee'. These groupings proved fluid and led in different directions. Inspiration also came from Amanda Gorman and Cecilia Knapp – one through her podcasts and the other through a visiting workshop. Both these vibrant young poets showed the way to having fun with words.

Poetry Please

It does not matter how short
The ideas that come in a poem
The words now must be caught
In a way that will really show 'em
What fun to start the day
By writing words in play

'Get Ready, Get Set, Get going, Get on it
Calling all Mayfield to write a sonnet'

For the final collection, I have selected poems by Year Group – and sometimes given a short preamble where necessary.

I hope that this will be the first of several anthologies and look forward to having all year groups and even more staff represented in the future.

SLM, Mayfield, August 2022

Mayfield Poetry Please

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Forward:</i>	1
<i>Introductory poem</i>	4
A Way with Words	4
<i>Year 7</i>	5
Sonnet to the stars	5
The Queen	5
<i>Year 8</i>	6
Cherry Blossom	6
A Poem	6
Strawberry Love	7
The art of early Teenagedom	7
A Daisy	8
<i>Year 9</i>	8
Sonnet 2	8
On a Plane	8
They Said	9
Poem inspired	9
My Name	10
<i>Year 10</i>	11
COVID19 Isolation poem	11
Fringe	11
If I were a Colour	12
As I open My Book	12
Heroism and Righteousness and Virtue	12
Mayfield June Morning	13
Paper Crown Parade	14
The Colours of the Jubilee Rap	14

Mayfield Poetry Please

The Sea Circle	15
Summer	15
Rules	16
Grandfather	16
Awakening	17
Kitchen sinks and Cabinets	17
I Remember	18
Stream Cottage	18
When I became a bird	19
Music Box	20
Control	20
Loveless yet in Love	21
Year 12	22
Feeling/ Home	22
Staff	23
Do you want to know a word?	23
Small Bodies of water – Sonnet	23
The English teacher on being asked to write a sonnet	24
To Dust	24
June Jubilee	25
Abrambulada	25
Ethereal	26
Ukraine’s Resistance	26
Anstey House	27

INTRODUCTORY POEM

A WAY WITH WORDS – Mike Powell and SLM

*This email conversation about printing the posters started off the entire *Poetry Please* project*

A Way with Words

Hi Lucinda,
It would seem you have selected correctly
As we can deal with this directly

The format is fine
But will it be in time?
Please let us know
And then it will be all go

Best Wishes

*My first entry! Yippee.
In you I trust, To do what must. So let it go, let it go, let it go.....*

Hi Lucinda,
They're all done
So good to know I have won
Your confidence it would seem
But maybe It's all just a dream

YEAR 7

Year 7s were inspired by dynamic Ms Bell, but only a couple were brave enough to submit their gems.

SONNET TO THE STARS – Kitty

This was inspired by thinking about what Shakespeare might have thought in the 21st century.

The stars were shining in the dark night sky.
The swirly dust grew tall towards the moon.
As the sun went down, I let out a sigh.
The gloomy night sky will appear very soon.
I lay on the ground looking at the stars.
I have spotted a shooting star skiing.
I lay on the ground and can only hear cars
Like I am the only human being.
I can hear the whispers on the soft wind.
The stars light up the night and tend to shine.
I cannot move, I am on the ground pinned.
I look at the dark trees; I see a pine.
And as I fall asleep, I dream about
If I would be here if stars I was without.

THE QUEEN – Annette

This poem is a homage to The Queen in her Platinum Jubilee Year

Tough wars and endless tasks
With hardly any time to relax
Not even a time to fix a crack!

Who is this hero
As strong as an arrow
It is The Queen

Corgis to look after
Matters to take care of
A country to rule
What has The Queen been through!

70 years on the throne
Not once a complain
All through this reign

Mayfield Poetry Please

YEAR 8

The challenge for the second edition of Poetry Please was sonnets –14 lines of iambic pentameter with a strict rhyme scheme. Certain people got carried away in the moment while ‘A Daisy’ focused on lovely rhyming.

CHERRY BLOSSOM – Elsie

Cherry blossom blooming on a bright tree
Glowing radiant All Through the Night
I love the way you glisten peacefully
Oh, cherry blossom makes me want to write

How are you like a Japanese maple?
You are more perfect, gracious and fancy
Colours of your leaves a fashion staple
You're a Roma more bright than a pansy

What ways do I love you? Oh, oh, there are many
I love your sweet leaves flowers and petals
Your bark more brown than my grandma's old penny
My love for you most sharp like nettles

I go even though I feel full of Sorrow
Know what's said or my heart will be hollow

A POEM – Anon

A poem is a name; A poem is a game
A poem has a beat; a poem has feet
A poem is for brains; a poem rhymes the same
A poem don't repeat; a poem don't heat

A poem is for fun; a poem in the sun
A poem is cool; but not for a fool
A poem has begun; and is for everyone,
A poem in a pool; a poem on a stool.

A poem is a tool; A poem is for school,
A poem is to be read; and to be said,
A poem is a rule; a poem is a jewel,
A poem in my head; a poem I dread,

No category; just Auditory
A poem is a story; A poem is said in glory.

STRAWBERRY LOVE – Alice

Summer seeds sleep quiet in her sockets
Distracting you from her strawberry jaw
One thought and my heart's off like a rocket
Passion's prisoner and my eyes an outlaw

She finally sees a new side to me
People start to suspect there's more to us
Her touch makes my heart wail like a banshee
After all this time I now have her trust

Dents in my strawberry love start to show
Her scent starts to fade, her red now so tired
She no longer smiles and loses her glow
This woman is still all I desired

All her faults are what make her so perfect
When she lets me in and confides in me
Finally I understand how to be free

Then it all ends, so sudden and abrupt
Love's like a strawberry: it

Can

Be

Plucked

The inspiration for this poem was actually a smell of strawberry body cream and it's about a couple who fall in love and deal with new challenges but at the end the girl dies and the man is left alone. He saw her as his strawberry, so I've got lots of hints to the strawberry like "red" and "seeds".

THE ART OF EARLY TEENAGEDOM – Sophie (edited)

It was my birthday last year.
I thought being a teen would be a blast.
My mum said "It will all be fun my dear"
But it turns out thirteen has gone too fast!

When you're young you admire teens,
You look at them and wonder what they've done.
But what a difficult year it has been
I learn to get through with some teenage fun!

Some days, no most, right now, are here at school.
I have to try to remember my books.
With little to do because school isn't that cool
But when we say that, teachers give us looks.

So, I've looked back at what my life has been,
While looking forward to being an older teen!

A DAISY – Maggie

A daisy is a flower,
A face has a cheek.
A king has his power,
A fly is very weak.
A girl has a hand
A dad is a farmer.
A boy can stand.
A dad is a charmer
A teacher's always true.
A dog wants more,
A piece of work's due.
A poem I adore,
A library has a bookshelf,
A house has a door,
A friend always thinks of herself!



YEAR 9

SONNET 2 – Eva

Should I compare you to a midnight owl?
You are more annoying and not as wise.
Your stupidity makes me want to scowl.
And glare right into your deep sea-green eyes.

An owl is a lovely and handsome bird.
Sadly, your looks are nothing in compare.
Your eyes are so large, it's almost absurd,
And never have I seen such messy hair.

On top of all that, you drool when you sleep.
Just the thought of it really disgusts me.
Sometimes I wonder why I even keep
Coming back to you, the son of the sea.

Even though you often bring me great pain,
Know I love you anyway, seaweed brain!

ON A PLANE – Ioanna

Puffs of milk white cotton resting on a vibrant blue blanket
The view below intriguing to a herd of eyes.
Peering up are those seeking to escape

From the present they have been unwelcomely gifted.
Lifted from the land all have their own story
Flying closer to blissfulness or further.
All main characters of their own tale.
Perhaps unknowingly crossing paths
With future partners, friends and enemies.
All possibilities welcome or unwelcome,
The superior contrasting with the ill-treated,
All beautifully and unconsciously
Intertwined in each other's chapters.
Never to lay eyes upon each other again.

THEY SAID – Charmaine

They said it has all ended
Our voice once loud and plain
In justice we transcended
Yet still resulted in vain.
They said our fires are dead
Umbrellas once flourished in yellow
Now only blossom in blue, black and red.
But not any of them know.
Hear the distant echo
Rumbles to fire rekindled
Where sunlight can only be yellow.
Again, we will be reassembled
Hands holding hands, we will proudly say:
'The liberation of our times, let it be today'.

POEM INSPIRED – Erin

I asked the class to write something about what they felt on a birthday after reading Dylan Thomas' 'Poem in October'. Erin chose to go with the feelings of 'Stockholm Syndrome' generated by the references to 'borders' and 'gates', instead.

My Birthday began with,
Fear, longing, anxiety,
Wonder, death, anger,
I have decided that happiness is a myth.

Maybe if I was taller,
Or a little bit shorter,
Then I could reach out and grab it, but every-time I try to jump my mouth only
Fills with the familiar stony grit,
Which is not the sweet caramel of love and warmth,
But instead, the flavour of darkness and blood.

Those were the dark thoughts that filled my mind.

But my Birthday ended with a new knowing,
A knowing that you will only understand
If you experience it yourself.
The knowing is that when you are trapped
In a particular space for days,
Weeks,
Months,
Years,
It is a prison in itself.
You long for your death,
But when it never occurs you don't feel any less.....
Lonely?
Loved?

Instead, you begin to caress the walls
With the warmth of your presence.
You begin to apologise for your behaviour of
Kicking,
Screaming,
Punching,
Fighting and damaging your love.
You love the space.
You love the cracks,
You love the imperfections and smooth surfaces.
You love the
never-ending end.

MY NAME – Sarah

Originally written as part of a writing exercise, this poem was the first selected for the Jubilee edition – part sonnet and part self-expression, it gloriously sums up personal identity.

My name is Sarah Elizabeth Davids.
Named like the Queen?
No, like ALL the greats that came before me
Not the fame nor the big names, but individuality
Eliza, Elissa, Elsie and Elise
Lisette, Lizzy, Lib and Libby.
The girls that stood behind their man
And the girls that stood up and thought of the next great plan.
But that's just the middle, a small part of what makes me, me.
My religion stands represented whenever my name is remarked
And I can say with a smile, that 'Sarah' is now a part
Of the Welsh community and fellow British company.
The Indian dish that stands for English nationality

Is my favourite which suits my love for diversity.
So, I'll wave my flag – a red cross not a first aid sign –
And watch as English, Welsh and every other part of me combine.

YEAR 10

COVID19 ISOLATION POEM - Clara

The January blues locked away in a room as the double line creates an endless doom,
The slate stone cloudless sky reflection in the pupil of my eye,
The sandstone candle light arrays a golden aura,
The indigo orchids suffocated by the endless clothes consuming my bedroom floor,
The leftover brown stew creates a malodorous stench,
My knotted dirty hair hidden in my filthy foul bed sheets
But it's the end of day one,
At least...

FRINGE - Chloe

I wander these chartered streets deprived from love
a huge empty nothing we fear.
But yet the centre of everything that I myself know.
Empty is: my stomach, my heart, my city
and most of all my people.
Their bodies lay bare.
My city hiding amongst the colossal wreck that is the Fringe
the place I, we
used to call our home.
Now it is the fringe, boneless and bare.
The lone and level sands stretched far
what was once a place of life,
is now history.
It's identity carved out
And
it's love burned by despair and hate.
I stare impassively and listen,
imagining that I can hear their voices catching on the wind,
their infectious laughter and mesmerising songs.
I hear a low whistle as the wind brushes
abruptly through the abandoned villages,
the flapping cloths and cottons
of the fabrics still tasselled round their previous owners;
clinging desperately to them
fighting to not let go of the past,
knowing that if they fail
their memories will be lost forever in the sand.
We must not let their honour fade in the absence of words.
Albeit I cannot oppose my hapless fortune. I can fight
for some form of justice through remembrance by
the power of my words.

IF I WERE A COLOUR - Greta

If I were a colour, I would be blue
Everyone sees you from a different point of view.
You roam in the sky, you float in the sea
I would be so free

My cousin, magenta
Is so smart she calls herself an 'invent a'
We stroll round the world
And see it all untwirl

And this is the life of blugenta.

AS I OPEN MY BOOK - Edith

As I open my book,
I see the sheer amount and am shook.
It's waiting out before my eyes,
I begin to feel like I want to cry.

As I open my guide,
There is no one around for me to confide,
I feel like I'm drowning,
I look up and can see my frowning.
As I open my planner,
My brain starts to stammer,
My mind begins to wander,
As I sit there and ponder.

As I open my bag,
I can already feel the drag,
Of my work just waiting,
As I stare debating.

As I open my eyes,
I can hear the subtle cries,
Of my weekend ahead,
Full of guilt and dread.

As the weekend ends,
And school starts to descend,
I lie in bed at about ten,
Waiting for it all to happen again.

HEROISM AND RIGHTEOUSNESS AND VIRTUE – Sophie

Heroism and righteousness and virtue,
We see these words everywhere,
Our news filled to the brim,
With stories of bravery and valour.

We say how inspired we are,
By their great, enormous feats,
But sometimes what we truly are,
Is powerless, scared and weak.

It's easy to say there's strength in numbers,
Strength in me and you,
But loneliness and separation,
Stop us from pulling through.

Maybe we're not as brave as we'd like to be,
Our hearts aren't all as one,
But the warmth we get from being together,
Makes it worth the fear, pain and pressure,
So maybe one day, our battle can be won.

*The remaining poems written by Year 10s were inspired by a workshop given by Cecilia Knapp.
She encouraged the girls to write poetry based on a series of prompts:*

- a) Using a set of phrases starting with 'This morning' and 'we must'*
- b) Starting with 'When I was a bird'*
- c) Making the persona a metaphor*
- d) Creating a memory through the senses.*

All of the following poems tap into these prompts.

MAYFIELD JUNE MORNING – Nicole

This morning I wake up with sun
Hammering its way through my window
I can barely hear the sounds of cars and trucks
Surrounding nature's wonders as they rock.
We must trust that Blessed Cornelia will
Pray and guide us throughout this day.
Spring will be an artist's palette
As all Mayfield's flowers burst into bloom.
As the trees regain their life,
I cannot help but admire the lone cherry
That blooms through all adversity
Sprinkling the ground with pink
Oh! What a sight – I cannot blink.

And although we cannot feel it yet
We all must not ever forget
To wish our beloved Queen
A very happy jubilee.

PAPER CROWN PARADE – Iulia

I remember when I rolled up to school
On a special day, clueless until
I saw the blue, white and red
Whirring around.
We paraded in a large imperfect circle
The hot tarmac simmered under my feet.
I pushed my paper crown
Further up my head.
My fringe tickled my nose.
The parade was full of giggles
And stolen conversations.
Before I went back home
I received my diamond plate
The artistry messy, but full of love
My fingertips running over
My initials, engraved by a teacher.

THE COLOURS OF THE JUBILEE RAP – Maddie and Clara

The colours of the Jubilee, yeah, I mean they stand with me
I can hear the crowd as they speak
And I really think that The Queen is key
But the man who stole our hearts is the Louis
He is at the age of 4 yet he still scores.
Harry and Meghan, you know they came back
With Lilibet their li'l princess.
When they left, they caused a mess
And left Will and Kate with the rest.
Hold up, hold up hold up, can we switch the language
I'm getting ready for the party with the colours of the Jubilee
They stand with me; this girl is key, her name is Megee
Harry may be her man, but I've always been such a fan,
I'd be a clown not to see her crown, crown crown....
The colours of the Jubilee stand with me
I can hear the crowd as we speak
Parades and tea take the stage. The public
Were big fans. Buck Pal was lit right up
Yet the Jubilee is at an end and boring school will make amends.
The colour of the Jubilee – yeah – they stand with me
I can hear the crowd as we speak,
and I really think that The Queen is key.
This year has been one of the worst
but historically it has been a first
Covid 19 and The Platinum Jubilee.
It was brilliant you better believe

many countries came together
there was even good weather
many congratulations to The Queen
and we are all very keen
to celebrate the next Jubilee.

THE SEA CIRCLE – Lucia

I have been thinking about the sea:
I am the ocean's darkest deep.
I remember when I was lost
I believe it was another summer's day
When the sun shone like a star
And spring enveloped me around.
I am no longer lost;
Loneliness retreats like a wave;
Night feels like day
And, of course, the pain has gone away.

This morning He left for good
We must trust he finds his way.
Spring will be a new beginning
As the trees cover up the past
And though we cannot feel it yet
We know he will return, of course.

SUMMER – Eloise

I remember my first summer in Maine,
On our rocky island with the crashing waves and the hot tar
That burnt our soles as we ran.
Anything but beautiful but it was our own.
I remember the cheap American diner where we would spend our days
With its peeling paint off damp walls
And the thick waffles slapped across plastic plates,
With our lipsticks from duty free that sat heavy on our lips
And then smeared against each other's cheeks.
I remember the lake best of all.
All the bikini bodies and bad spray tans on girls who bleached their hair.
But we lay in a separate reality,
Indifferent to any sound or laugh directed at us.
I remember skinny dipping at night,
And towelling off in your parents' kitchen
Before sneaking past on creaky floors,
Far too early to be up
And far too tired to pretend we weren't out.
I remember the callouses that stroked your knuckles,

After you so fervently demanded that you could climb that tree.
And the rope that we swung on in my garden
Hung by my mum when she, too, was young and in love.
If I hold my self clearly now, I can still feel the fear
As we jumped off to catch ourselves on dirt and grass,
Landing bruises on our knees while running from the society
The rest of our world wanted us to join.
My summers in America were my undoing and yet I will let them happen again and again.

RULES – Lucy

We must “trust” the process they say –
But I can’t do it not even for another day.
Ridiculous rules loaded on us by school
Suffocate me, sink me, drown me but
I can’t die. No end – I am falling
Into the abyss – down down down
I go. Every freedom removed
A weight added to my feet
Pulling me further and faster to the
Bottom. Maybe it will be quiet down there
A place where I can hear myself think
A place where “they” can no longer reach me.

GRANDFATHER – Amelia

Climbing on hay bales on an August afternoon
Hot sun and thick dust tickle my nose as I breath.
Hay scratching and poking at my childish hands and legs
Crawling up the unsteadily swaying stack.

I remember sitting on Grandfather’s shoulders
Feeling like I was as high as the sky.
The dropping feeling as he pretended to lose
His grip while exclaiming loudly in French.

I remember the overwhelming emptiness filling me
The day we could not play anymore.
I remember how the crisp snow-smell
No longer comforted me as before,
Twinning as it did with the smell of wood
From his factory. I regret so much
How little I remember. How I wish
I had taken time to engrave his memory
Onto my heart.
I am now broken over the ghost of a memory.

AWAKENING – Rebecca

The ray of sun streams onto my face.
Here I am in my safest place.
The golden hue brightens up the room,
Small, embroidered flowers on my curtains are ready to bloom.
The loud tweets of birdsong deafen the silence,
Like blaring assault sirens.
The sweet tangy taste of vanilla overwhelms my sense.
It makes my nostrils and tongue tense.
I can smell the crisp, fresh morning,
As the moon goes back into its daylight mourning.
This is how I awake,
And begin my daybreak.

KITCHEN SINKS AND CABINETS – Breanna

Mum's already cooked dinner,
tucked away in shiny metal pans
with mismatched pale glass lids.
But I'm not hungry enough for
a full meal right now –
I just want a snack.
The sole of my slipper drags over
faded olive carpet fabric
and onto black and white chequered tiles.
For a moment, I wonder if I
should wipe off the black blotches
in the corner, before remembering
that it's just stains and scratches.
Not made by dirt or dust
or mould or rust
but merely ink stains of time's black quill.
The cabinet swings open,
revealing almost invisible salt granules
spilt on the bottom shelf.
It must have been Felix:
Mum should have scraped it away
and I wouldn't have scraped it
under the spices.
They itch my hand like
salty grains of sand as I
dump them in the bin.
Some still stick in the crevices of
my fingers.
I scrape them
out from under my nail.
The last time this happened was
the donuts on my ninth birthday.

Swapping table salt for caster sugar
never ends well,
no matter how much chocolate you soak it in.
My fingers almost scrape
the extractor fan-switch on.
I just want a snack.

I sigh and grab an orange
on the way out.

I REMEMBER – Sophie

I remember the sweet subtle aroma of the roses
I remember the feeling of the grass stuck between my toes.
I remember the bright yellows and purples of my Nana's tulips.
I remember the taste of the pure honey my bees would make.
I remember the gentle sound of the blackbirds
that would let me know they had arrived.
I remember my Nana; I remember her brightening smile.
I remember how the moon's beams would dance
off the windows in the greenhouse.
These were my favourite things about my Nana's garden.
Now she will always be in her garden,
Until the world's end.

STREAM COTTAGE – Megan

I remember our faces lighting up with joy
On that cold, damp, spring afternoon of my birthday,
the icy, hard snow running onto our delicate skin
Like a fountain pouring out luck.
We ran around the silver-covered garden, taking in
every last drop of snow.
The three of us comforted in our big furry hats.
Sitting here in my new home.
I miss looking out of our misted windows and seeing
the vivid grass,
whilst inhaling the sweetness of the flowers,
the sound of the trains hooting every few minutes
with the wafting of sweet banana bread filling our lungs.
My mind is deflating, thinking about our childhood memories
at Stream and in Butter's Lane.
The time the flock of goats came into our garden destroying
our flowers, from Stream Farm,
The trick or treating in the lanes,
walking across the picturesque hills of the deer park,
I could reflect and relive those memories for a long time.
But now it's time to close the chapter and think about
The future without any past regrets.
Stream Cottage will always be a part of me wherever I

go next.
It's a place we will all hold close in our hearts
With the memories of the people
While we open the new chapter,
Beginning again and filling all the empty pages
Of a new book.

WHEN I BECAME A BIRD- Angela

I became a bird of radiance
Wings of white as ice crystals
My wings soared as high as the celestial spirits
I thought I could reach the gates of Heaven
I was no longer confined in shackles of night
I was no longer in a cage
I was in custody of myself
The liberty I breathed for
My eyes brighter than the jewels
In a South African cave.

When I flew all I saw was endless blue
Smudged with wispy white streaks
All I saw was the light
The day was my safety net
The night was danger, unreal, mystery
The sky a dark canvas
Sprinkled with speckles of white
I flew so high, I almost reached the gates of Heaven
Like Lucifer I fell from Heaven.

My wings were stripped from me
New raven black spiky wings in place
My eyes snuffed out light
Like a flame that burned bright
Had ebbed away.
The night was dangerous
My fate and free will stripped
I saw all my monster
I saw a reflection of demons and death
I was an intercession of a monster
I cannot escape during night
Cursed by my own freedom.

MUSIC BOX – Leni

I am a music box:
I stand tall and strong
And with the turning of a key
I'll sing a lovely song.

I am a music box:
I cower small and weak
And with the turning of a key
I'll let out a quiet squeak.

I dance, I dance, around I go
A hop and a leap, I go to and fro
I dance I dance, still as a stone
No hop and no leap no further can I go.

My melody chimes
Through the ears of all
They smile and they laugh
At my meaningless call.

My empty requiem
Heard by the dead
Echoes through the halls
Begging safety from this
Bloodied head.

My tutu is clean
My hair up tight
My beauty gleams
I am a sight!

My dress is stained
My hair coated red
My face is fear
At the sight of the dead.

I am a music box
With a frozen key.

CONTROL – Becky

Control you cannot
Yet control you seek

This journey you've started
Is not for the meek.

Tremendous effort,
Unwavering faith,
One day at a time,
Each hour every day.

And on days when it's darkest,
For dark days will come,
Surrender to the highest
Remember why it begun.

Apologise to those,
The ones you have wronged.
Keep going on your journey,
Prevent your suffering prolonged.

Twelve steps feel a mountain,
Try not to look down,
The view is much greater
Each step from the ground.

LOVELESS YET IN LOVE – Amelie

I've been thinking about you
And the memories of times
Never spent together

I remember a time of
Freedom from these feelings,
A time where happiness
And pain weren't
Intertwined

I am a book bursting
With unread pages,
Desperate for someone to
Enjoy the life within

I'm starting to put my trust
in the doubts in my head
slowly being pulled by the
current to the darker side.

It's as if I'm in a boat
Stranded in the middle of
The vast tormented blue ocean
Wave upon wave threatening
To tip me over
No land in sight.

Ending out of reach.
Now that spring has opened the
Doors of possibility, I am hiding
Scared to walk through them
Heart clutched in frail hands
Trembling in fear of
Breaking.

Do I walk through the doors?
Arms outstretched with beating
Heart in hands
Or should I lock it up
And swallow the key?

These days, night feels like
Being stuck in silent woods
Hunted by the darkness of
My own mind
Cold and alone.

But of course, you're
Not there with
Me.

YEAR 12

FEELING/ HOME

Guilty, but ravishing in the secretive
Sweetness of one quid Haribos
from the Co-Op
Looking out into the
undulating curves of
green
O such freedom, as I
go about gulping down Coca-Cola
filling my mouth with chill in one go
refreshed, sensing aluminium
until Jasmine says we should now go
back

I plunge into the heavy/ leaden air
Somehow trapped in UGG boots/ that are too small/
This place is filled with weed and/crime
I go on the swing/
Trying to fit/ my fat long legs in between
the tiny gap
Between/ soft ground and wooden seat
Gripping/ hard on the rusted iron
My fingers yearning for connected solitude of
Home//

Commentary

Nina Powles' 'Mother tongue' provided inspiration for the structure and layout of the poem, I liked the idea of having two separate poems and place them in a way that somehow try to link them together. The forward slash as a punctuation device was important to her, I tried to twist it a little bit by placing them at places that would potentially create new meanings and interesting dissonances. Yueshi

STAFF

DO YOU WANT TO KNOW A WORD? – John Doy

Do you want to know a word?
The word is smeuse.
It's the hole in a hedge that a hedgehog hops through.
Foxes use them to flick between fields like stations on a radio,
Or channels on a TV,
Or apps on a phone.

While we sit in our blue lit darkness,
Slouched round at our machines,
They scroll through holes,
Ooze through smeuses:
Badger gates;
Squirrel portals;
Doors for dormice.

I like words you didn't know you needed
Until you know them,
Then you need them all the time.

I never saw a smeuse until I saw the word.
Now I see them everywhere.

Words help us to bring the world into focus:
To know what we are seeing
And sing the world into being.

SMALL BODIES OF WATER – SONNET – John Doy

The title inspired by another influential young poet, Nina Mingya Powles, who made all of us look at how we used words differently.

Small bodies of water glint below us
And we hover on the wind like kites.
In this dream I feel that we are closest:
Our bodies clothed in evening light.

No one can touch us when we are up here,
Our mouths grinned out at the joy of being.
We have no bonds, or dreams, or hopes, or fear:
Floating bodies see only with feeling.

Wordlessly, you take your leave and break

The air before you on your darkling way,
Clothes snapping as the rushing wind wake
Catches my throat with words I cannot say.

You start to ascend, and as I fall
Small bodies grow bigger, for you grow small.

THE ENGLISH TEACHER ON BEING ASKED TO WRITE A SONNET – Laura Parrett

Laura has a witty way with words and this poem was the distillation of a series of 'spoof' poetry style poems attempting forms as widely differentiated as villanelles and limericks.

To write a simple sonnet was the goal -
I asked my words to dance in verse and feet.
For Shakespeare beat with heel and toe and sole,
And this form was familiar and sweet.
I hoped to pick up speed and think in rhyme,
So every word could find its proper place.
But soon the nouns were moving out of time;
They fought the verbs to find the strongest space.
A sonnet asks for patience, skill and care,
She cannot let her meter loose to fly.
And if on one or three the stress might dare
To fall, then oh! – her sense is all awry.
I did not have the strength to start again:
At fourteen I put down my weary pen.

TO DUST – Emma Bell

Inspired by the Ash Wednesday Mass at Mayfield 2022

We are born from distant explosions –
Billions of years before our given time –
Formed from carbon: tiny chemical chains
Linking their arms to form our brittle form.
And with our eyes, we stare towards the sky.
These stars we see are glimpses from the start
Of Time: their shells long burned into dim husks
But their shooting echoes still shine bright for us.
Webb and Hubble scan the ends of space:
Planets, stars, moons, bodies, meteors,
Glorious technicolour worlds yet known,
Beauties of the galaxy now shown.
We are the stars; or equations held firm -
Flesh and life from dust, to dust we return.

JUNE JUBILEE – Joanna Staunton

Bedraggled as our celebration may be
She is the queen of all this
Smoke, straw
Men with dogs
Wet hair
Bluebells giving way to milkmaids
Down in the woods
As grey vapours turn platinum in sungleams
And a crowd flows like cream.

To goddess or saint
Or head of state
Or holy dame smiling, encircled by roses
In a garden, within cliff walls, inside chains of sea.

Let us offer these gazebos
sips of bitter
rilling gutters

We love our rights
But need our rites
So, I admit the queen of the May
As my subject today.

ABRAMBULADA – Lavinia Motoc

A stunning poem created by a Maths A level class showing deep sensitivity to the power of words.

wolves shaking off the snow
on my tongue,
a mouthful of cherries
clog the arteries.
I highjacked a train of callas
to say goodbyes
to my dad

goose bumps on skin.
nun's youth,
locked in a cupboard at school
ajar, familiar, yet peculiar,
diophantine equations
my dear valentine

ambrosiac, aphrodisiac
yesterday's champagne fizzed out

lethargic but tantalizing,
linkin park and nail varnish
in the car

isomorphic
me
the words
of mine

ETHEREAL – Milena Wolmarans

Another stunning poem from the science department.

Quiet contemplation...Dizzying in its vastness.
Endless landscapes broken only by the beat of a heart.
A listener. A watcher.
Searching... for something... and nothing.
A memory? A dream?
Illusion or delusion, it matters not.
Another time. This place. Here or there.
A paradigm.
Driftwood thoughts afloat on a sea breeze.
A presence; restful in its absence.
A pleasure. Unflinching.

UKRAINE'S RESISTANCE – SLM

This poem was inspired by an article about the power of poetry in the midst of war, written in March 2022 about Ukraine defending Kyiv. All the main words are taken from phrases in the article.

Strung through miles of frost bound birch woods, Ukraine's
Defence lines lie on Kyiv's Western flank.
Amid trenches and foxholes, soldiers strain
Hearing bombs echo and mortars clank.
Makeshift pill boxes, sandbags, and felled trees,
The only life running through dense forests.
Tank firing points concealed by brush wood frieze
Protecting all those so wholly distressed.
Crumbling Soviet era apartment blocks
Side by side with Scandi-style white housing
A glimpsed prosperity in shining locks
No longer home, nor secure, nor drowsing.
But Hark! Poetry heard above the curses
A dulcet counter, the sounds of verses.

ANSTEY HOUSE – SLM

This poem is the result of Cecilia Knapp's workshop, getting us to recall a place through the five senses. Both my children immediately recognised their grandparents' home without the guidance of the title.

I remember
Tea tray racing across the ice
A crashing bicycle behind the bridge
The lone Scot's Pine breaking the distant hedge
Visible from every window to the west
Silhouetted by glorious sunsets.

I remember
The crunch of the gravel making
A secret approach impossible.
The cool hard tile kitchen floor in black and red
The warm cream heart of house - The aga.

I remember
The comforting smell of the nursery
After Granny's furniture moved in
Reminding me of mornings spent with her.
Glittering Champagne fizzing on the tongue
And in golden glasses sparkling from the fire.

I remember
Lying in bed, swaddled in blankets
Listening to the house talking
Through the pipes, the mice in the roof
And footsteps on the stairs checking on me
Listening to the sound of summer in long light evenings.

I remember
Anstey.

Contributors

Alice, Amelia, Amelie, Angela, Annette, Ava, Becky, Breanna, Charmaine, Chloe, Clara, Edith, Eloise, Elsie, Emma, Erin, Eva, Greta, Ioanna, Iulia, Joanna, John, Laura, Lavinia, Leni, Lucia, Lucinda, Lucy, Maddie, Maggie, Megan, Michael, Milena, Nicole, Rebecca, Sarah, Sophie, Sophie, Sophie, Yueshi.