

Minds Unleashed



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*A Collection of Poetry by People
with a Mental Illness & their Carers*

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Introduction

Over the past 5 years I have been collecting personal stories of experiences with mental illness for a living manuscript called Glimpses and it is through this project that Minds Unleashed came about. I regularly received requests to include poetry in the manuscript; however I had never intended to include anything other than personal stories and felt it was not the right medium for poetry. Nonetheless people occasionally sent poetry and I kept it all the same. Finally I decided to research the interest in my putting together a collection of poetry and the response in just the first 3 days was overwhelming.

There is a wealth of such diverse creativity among those with a mental illness and poetry is just one of them. Personally I have found that poetry is a therapeutic and safe way of expressing the emotional roller coaster that we ride all too frequently and one that gives insight into our experiences in a very unique way.

Whether you read Minds Unleashed just because you like poetry, because you need to feel a connection with others who experience mental illness or because you are looking for a better understanding of what we experience, I hope you enjoy the following collection of poems.

All poetry contributed to Minds Unleashed is voluntary and for no monetary gain. Its contents can be read by Author on my website www.thisismyreality.com.au, also there is the provision to download the complete collection as one document.

Feel free to share it with friends, family, colleagues, well basically anyone and everyone.

Now sit back and enjoy. Prepare to be amazed, moved and wowed.

Upon Opening

*If you have picked me up
For the first time to read
Understand you enter our world
One full of minds in need*

*Welcome to our world
Do not run away
On these pages I will show you
Should you choose to stay*

*Be not afraid to open me
To see what is inside
For it is truth I hold
There is nothing I try to hide*

*But please do not take lightly
The words I choose to share
For inside you will see
Our world laid out bare*

By Robert Pierson

Poetry by Tracy Gaddin (deceased)

Pumpkin Time

Pumpkin time the revelry is over
I rise to my feet and step heavily to the door
My heart aches with the impending good-bye
An acute cacophony of feelings, and surge of energy
1 – 2 – 3 – 4
Then again 1-2-3-4, I will arrive at my destination
Calmed by the cool evening breeze, lulled by cricket calls
I put pen to paper then look to the morrow
My evening is now complete.

VASBYT – ALLES SAL REGKOM (Hang in there – everything will come right)

From my cigarette spiralling smoke
Such is my new found hope

Once a past of despair
A broken heart beyond repair

A hunger for substitute nourishment
Vasbyt – alles sal regkom
Self-control so hard to implement

As night would lead to day
Till as late as possible I lay

Gathering my strength for the morrow
A dark musical escape from the sorrow

Down but far from out
That's what I'm all about

With tenacity and Divine sustained will
I'm nearing the top of this hill

To those who have given me unfailing support
Thank you, and to my Loving Maker

Lord, open my lips and my mouth will sing Your praise

Poetry by Tracy Gaddin (deceased)

Break of Dawn

Break, break, break of dawn
Get up now, and don't yawn
The bed is warm
I know you're torn
It's the break of dawn

A new day has just begun
Resist temptation party person
Look to the rising sun
There's so many ways today to have fun.
If you decline the chance, you'll have none.

Party person break, break, it's day break,
Get up now and have the cake
Say the morning prayer for your soul's sake
Get up now, it's not too late.

Got my body, got my soul, got my brawn.
Thank you G-d, I'm so glad its dawn.

Sleep Eludes Me

Sleep eludes me
I have chased her for hours
I try to capture her by the lull of light lyrics on my radio
I try to trick her by teasing her with my bedroom light,
Pretending that her entrapment is not my aim.

My pulse races and thoughts rollercoaster through my mind
I toss to and fro
My throat is dry so I relieve this physical thirst

My belly rumbles and I satisfy this physical hunger
What I thirst for and at this hour of the morn
I cannot have satiated is the taste of your lips
What I hunger for also at this hour of the morn
And ache for is your touch
A simple caress of my face or your hand touching mine

I would revel in the experience of your body simply brushing past mine

Poetry by Tracy Gaddin (deceased)

Wracked by Guilt

I am wracked by guilt constantly though I know I have done nothing seriously
Wong in my life
It was curiosity trace, just curiosity trace, Joanna confirmed this
I must challenge negative thoughts of guilt
I desire nights at the Fish Caf, pen in hand poised to proliferate poetry and prose
Accompanied by music and latte upon latte - a safe place with many memories
The burnished bronze liquid glides down my gullet and rests in my stomach easing my
aching and guilt wracked body, emotional pain too
So bad I slumber in bed all day and drag my listless body from such slumber just to eat
and ablute
Chuffing like a chimney
My longings and yearnings – I feel a quiver inside me, maybe I am not dead completely
inside, perhaps there is some passion in me still
Passion to create, passion to work, passion for happiness and joy, peace of mind
spirituality and exhilaration
For company and compassion, sympathy and empathy, consideration and charity
I slump again, overwhelmed by life and its demands – baby steps trace yes baby steps
and it will all come right a 6 year plan after this breakdown. All your dreams are possible
I have savings and a car and a home loving friends' family and acquaintances and I have
started to create yet again. But I seethe inside with anger and bitterness for those who are
not good and have more than me. Inside I feel I am healing , at my core, perhaps this is
why the pain is so great I am redraw after so many near death events, yes so many

Poetry by Julie Raddley

Dark Cloud and Me

As I sit here and wondering why
this dark cloud is over me,
should it be or is it me.

It's not nice to wake and be this way
as sunshine and happiness is what I need
instead of it hovering over me.

Why is it that I can't get out of bed
and why I need tablets to stay ahead.

People wonder what's wrong with you
but only if they really knew.

So lets push this dark cloud away
and start to enjoy every single day
instead of sleeping it away
and being clouded with it over me.

Poetry by Camilla Parkes

Nothing's the Truth

Have you ever felt pure pain?
When your thoughts are tearing
At your brain.
And the sanity you had left
Has gone insane.
When you cry everyday and
Your not sure why
How nothings the truth and
Everything's a lie.
You sit down and fantasise
How to die.
And realise the only escape
Is to get high,
Somehow memories f*ck with
Your head.
And you are sick with nostalgia
Squirming in bed.

Poetry by Julia Hart

Nameless Poet

I'm an old 'Girl',
A faded pearl,
A broiler chook
Without a book
To my name.

Have tried and tried
In vain,
Have cried and cried
In pain.
Through tears
Throughout the years.

Have written poems
To fill a dozen toms
Some doggerel,
Some beautiful,

But only god listens
And reads as a rule,
And I remain
Without a book
To my name.

Poetry by Julia Hart

Rebel Without A Hope

Sometimes I'm a rebel
And sometimes I'm tame
Sometimes I'm an extrovert
And sometimes I'm shy

I've been called a 'pervert'
A 'psycho', a 'guy'
A 'guts' and a 'prostitute'
Now, for god's sake why?

They think I'm a moron
Dumb, deaf and blind
I have to stay silent
Around people of this kind

I search for my future
My man, my career
Sometimes I think
There's no hope for me, dear

I found a man once
But he's under the earth
And of a suitable substitute
There's an absolute dearth

Am I doomed to fly solo?
Without hope, full of pain?
Can I never see the sun shine again?

Poetry by Tina Currah

A Day At The Fair

Up and down, up and down,
The meaning of Bi-Polar.
Round and round, over and over,
The Bi-Polar roller coaster.

In and out, in and out,
Happy....., strong, then fear and doubt.
Round and round, over and over,
This is the Bi-Polar roller coaster.

Twisting and turning and upside down,
"I can fly", "I'm gonna drown!"
Round and round, over and over,
The dreaded Bi-Polar roller coaster.

Up and down, in and out,
A hundred voices scream and shout,
Round and round, over and over,
Please stop the Bi-Polar roller coaster.

Under and through, under and through,
To myself it's hard to be true.
Round and round, over and over,
Conquer the Bi-Polar roller coaster.

Up and over, round and through –
Try to learn what not to do!
In and down, out and under –
Don't be scared.... It's only thunder!

Twisting, turning, upside down –
Make a smile where there's a frown.
Round and under and inside out –
Through and up and over.....
This is my life, aboard the Bi-Polar roller coaster.

Poetry by Tina Currah

Shadows in the Dark

Memories in my head, cannot sleep, cannot think.
Shadows in the dark, insanity on the brink.
Tightness in me chest, breathing very deep.
All I want, all I want, to be able to go to sleep!
I see the house, I see the room, I see me and him.
I see the couch and the blanket, then everything goes dim.
Every sound becomes an echo; every thought becomes a dream.
How could someone, who said he loved me, find the cause to be so mean?
Supposed to be my protector, shelter me from harm.
But he's the one who hurt me, his cool abrasive charm.
Tears roll down my cheeks, feeling so alone.
Scared as scared can be, want to use the phone.
But who to call, what to say? Can only move my hand.
Putting pen to paper, take me to another land.
Take away the pictures, all the feelings, all the hurt.
Take away the memories, so I can feel worth more than dirt.
Sinking in a pit, of darkness and despair.
Holes inside my heart, needing to repair.
Tired now must go to sleep.
Rest my weary head.
Try and dream away these feelings,
Of wishing I were dead.

Poetry by Tina Currah

Children

Children need protection
They need to know they're safe
No matter if they're big and strong
Or frightened and naïve.

Adults are their protection
So why do they abuse?
They're supposed to love and cherish them
Not abandon, hate and use!

A child looks for safety
In the arms of an adult
They long for kindness, caring too
Not invasion and assault!

When they hunger for affection
It's a hug and kiss they're after
Not sexual exploitation
Or the fondlings of a father!

All they want is LOVE
It's a pure and simple need
So to all you heartless adults
Who refuse to heed
To the cries of help and anguish
With which these children do implore
Then kindly pack your blood bags
And

EXIT OUT THE DOOR!

Poetry by Tina Currah

Let Me Be Free!

She's an innocent child who sits in her room
A stranger enters; there's an air of doom.
Her heartbeat quickens as the steps turn to thuds
The shadow closes over her, "My God what have I done?"
She thinks to herself at this frightening sight
Is there no one to help this poor child's plight?
Where is her mother and where are her friends?
As she sits there and prays that this nightmare does end
All of a sudden, this scene, it blacks out
Her grown up mind then riddled with doubt
Was it real or was it a dream?
What does all of this really mean?
Is she at fault or is it he?
She's so confused she just wants to be free.
Free to live life in a natural way
And block out the pictures she sees night and day
She wants to be free and her soul set at peace
The guilt and the dread she wants them to cease!
She wants to be free and feel like she could
Be joyous and happy and feel like she should!

Poetry by Raymond Westwood

And When You Smile

And when you smile the world's a happy place
It makes the bad times disappear
There's always good cheer for everyone
And when you smile there's gladness in the air
It's something that we all can share
The world's a happy place for every-one
And when you smile you bring out the sunshine
Every time that it rains it brightens up
Each day that we live
And when you smile all the while
That you feel a little sad you'll feel better
For it in the end

Sights for Sore Eyes

Sights for sore eyes are like flowers, trees, sunrises
Yes such sights for sore eyes they bring joy
To my heart's desires
Sights for sore eyes are just like a moonlit night
Yes such sights for sore eyes they bring peace
To my heart's delight
Sights for sore eyes they are simply heaven sent
Yes such sights for sore eyes they give rest
To my heart's content
Sights for sore eyes are like rainbows in the sky
Yes such sights for sore eyes simply set my heart alight

Poetry by Relic Girl

Anxiety

Awakening at daylight
No sleep, no rest
Alert, full of fright
Increasingly depressed

Rippling, crawling inside
Wave after wave
Can't seem to hide
Becoming enslaved

Trying to reassure
Rolling in, gathering speed
Too much to endure
A huge stampede

Buzzing, jittering, crying
Got to run, got to flee
Spun tight & dying
Never to be free

Running, fleeing, frantic
Faster & unstoppable
Cut off & panicked
Going under, it's horrible

Nothing will distract
Nothing will ease
A huge impact
Help me please

Poetry by Relic Girl

Depression

Inside me is so dark
So full and so heavy
Being stifled is that spark
That keeps me so happy

Thick oozing cold dampness
Feeling I'm drowning
Locked in a bleakness
Climbing and struggling

Trying to surface
And just take a breath
But am just so listless
And close to death

Where is that glimmer
That gives me hope
Seems to just get dimmer
Until I can no longer cope

Shaky Senses

I see it as left
They see it as right
Oppositional truth
What is real?

Periodical niceness
Slotted in the gaps
Gnawing hunger growing
Isolating and distorting

Many many faces
Masks to decipher
A crack is heard
Splintering and crumbling

A centrifugal force
Activated and fierce
Tearing away my sanity
My mind stunned and spent

Poetry by Relic Girl

Hand in Hand

I look beside me
And see a little girl
She has blonde hair
And a little curl
The sadness in her eyes
And the tears on her cheek
Make me ask her why
She feels so bleak

She takes my hand
And looks up into my face
She says, "you understand"
You've been in my place
We've both been hurt
All alone and scared
There were events we couldn't avert
It felt like nobody cared

I nod my head
And ask, "how do you know"
Nothing needs to be said
Because she's my shadow
Me when I was young
We now walk together
Sharing all that stung
Halving our torment forever

Truth

Hope shrinking in the face of clarity
Offering diminishing protection
Like an umbrella in the wind
Terror rising up to rip at the growing holes

Aloneness scraping at my heart
Sadness swelling so fast inside
Too much for me to contain
But nowhere for it to go

Help, please help me
Be safe within the walls of my illusions

Poetry by Relic Girl

Inner Pain

Inside is a malignant growth
a time bomb
ready to explode

My very own soul of darkness
Inescapable
Ripping and tearing

Moving, changing
Hiding deeply
Crying behind the mask

Fear always entrenched
In this inner world
Beating in time with my heart

The hurt so heavy
So invasive
So crushing

Even when still
Its presence is felt
Deep inside myself

Being

I sit on the edge of a cliff
Where day meets night and
Earth connects with the Universe
Buffered only by stormy seas
And billowing clouds
An abyss between now and then
Heartache and happiness
Me and you
The battle inside surrounded by anguish
Alluringly drawn forward
Blinded by the mournful darkness
The rocky outcrop a shaky foundation
Any movement disorientating
No choice but to fall
No reason to fight
No strength to resist the painful jolts
Options dwindling and doors closing
Light and love disappearing
From a bleak and desolate life

Poetry by Relic Girl

Perception

Why does the bad etch and burn?
Why does the good only flutter and skim?
Why does the bad leave deep imprints?
Why does the good only shift the surface?

With the bad
You know it has called
Time so slow
An ending never in sight

With the good
You need to stare hard
Over before you know
Reflecting as if it's a dream

The bad so heavy
Dragging and dominant
Arrogant and scary
Strong as it tugs

The good so flimsy
Flickering and elusive
Meek and mild
Tentative as it tugs

Good versus Bad
Bad versus Good
A crazying tug-of-war
Where the loser is always me

Poetry by Relic Girl

Depression Again

There is a horrible dark place
Where nothing much matters
It is a cold murky space
Full and ready to shatter

The pollution then seeping
From a bottomless well
Spreading and Eroding
Leaving a lifeless shell

Empty yet so full
Numb but too active
So unbearably awful
The load so destructive

Heavy, dark and damp
No warmth able to enter
No fuel for the lamp
This feeling my tormentor

The hope has been gone
For far too long
Don't know what to do
Do I just bid adieu?

Poetry by Relic Girl

Two Hearts

A huge heart
Admired, praised and honoured
A huge heart
Empty, aching and needy
A huge heart, so full
An asset and awarded
A huge heart, so hollow
Defective and ignored
A huge heart
Gives, loves and understands
A huge heart
Depleted, starved and misunderstood
A huge heart
Rewarding and fulfilling
A huge heart
Punished and broken
My huge heart
Aches to be filled
Filled with love and warmth
Each beat no longer painful
Existing alongside a tiny heart
So shrivelled and so starved
Struggling so hard to beat
And to stay alive

Poetry by Relic Girl

Please Tell Me Why

Why? Please tell me why
I began life amid such cruelty
A little girl with no ally
Alone, frightened, a casualty

I was only very little
I did not understand
The tiny leader of a battle
I could not command

Help me, please help me
I needed love and protection
Not violence and brutality
Just a little bit of affection

It's not at all fair
This legacy I'm left
So often full of despair
And totally bereft

Life plagued with doubt
Feeling I'll never mend
Day in and day out
Will it never end?

Poetry by Relic Girl

Confetti Girl

I abandon me
As others have
I reject me
As others do
I invent a me
Others might like
No, not right
I try again
Splitting pieces off
Desperate now
Can't they see
I try so hard
Is this who you like?
What about now?
Please, please
Which one is right?

Swirling breezes
Round and round
Chaos and confusion
Is all that abounds
Reaching out
I search for me
Scraps and fragments
Scattered about
A piece here
A piece there
A broken puzzle
Of which I despair
So elusive
So unreal
Flakes of me
Flutter by

Hope fades
For my dismal heart
I can't find
All the parts
Why did I ever
Split apart
What was precious
What was rare
I was enough
I was whole
Before their warfare
I was me

Poetry by William Tyler

Still Life

“Still-life”, as the term is used re Art,
Like a static photograph, is true to the thing.
In life. Thus, we say “There must be something”.
And unknowing things can be depicted, as
Part of life, by those who are knowing, in life.

It is all the Truth and just goes to show
What a remarkable thing that is.

The still-life is a triumph of realism,
But needs on knowing to appreciate it.
So, a moving picture is more true
To life, with movement; and still-life
May seem more like death.

Yet, one must understand that there are
THINGS to one’s pride, (hair, nails,
teeth and bones, for instance) that
may remain, after death. Helpfully,
Jesus put it that “The dead know not anything”.
And that to know the Truth is to be “set free”,
Because, I imagine, knowledge of the Truth
Gives understanding.

Whatever the things depicted in still-life,
They are still life!

Poetry by William Tyler

To Ross C

Sickness leaves me much in need,
And you are friend indeed,
To be interested in my endeavours,
When boredom would stifle me.
You inspire by example,
I know I can always turn to you,
Which makes me glad of something in the living,
Glad to be your companion
On this journey of speed and twists.
You help allay life's lonely fears.
We met as youths and for all the years
Our hearts are still the same.

Spirits

At the heart of the earth is love, one feels:
But the earth, like all real things,
Casts its shadow. The spirits cast none.
As long as real things cast their shadows,
Someone is always in the dark.
Only the spirits move in perpetual light.

Wonderful

Happy and gay and proud as can be,
The best that can happen
Has happened to me!

My heart is awake to the wonder,
The wonder of someone to love.
My soul would rejoice to embrace here,
The one that I love from afar.
It's true and it's all that I live my life for,
The wonder of finding this wonderful love.

Could she but return my devotion
And love me as I adore here?
True life would begin with our heart-beats
And mutual joy would be ours.
It's true, I would be living just to love here
And wondering why life's the wonder of love.

What about self-love?

Poetry by Carol Harris

My Dream

I want to be free,
Oh! To be me!
Not trapped in my head,
To be myself,
Like everyone else.

I go into a shell and
Not come out so easily,
A door comes,
A door comes down,
I am locked in.

These days,
The doors don't go up,
Or down as much.

Poetry by Nicci Wall

Your Expectations

Don't place your own expectations on me,
For I cannot, in all conscience conform.

Don't place your own expectations on me,
For my world is a kaleidoscope of colours and shapes, where you see black and white.

Don't place your own expectations on me,
For they only add to my confusion and distress.

Don't place your own expectations on me,
For they eat away at my self-esteem.

Don't place your own expectations on me,
For they cloud my expectations of myself.

Don't place your own expectations on me,
For that confirms your inability to accept me as I am.

Don't place your own expectations on me,
For I will only put up walls and withdraw in self-preservation.

Don't place your own expectations on me,
For then neither of us will be disappointed.

Not Up, Not Down, But Not Right!

I am neither happy nor sad,
I am neither numb nor feeling,
I am neither lethargic nor energetic,
I am just existing.

I am neither withdrawn nor outgoing,
I am neither optimistic nor pessimistic,
I am neither productive nor unmotivated,
I am just existing.

I am neither thoughtful nor overly thoughtless,
I am neither disorganised nor organised,
I am neither reclusive nor welcoming,
I am just existing.

I am neither loving nor overly hateful,
I am neither selfish nor giving,
I am neither hypomanic nor depressed,
I am just going through the motions of life.

Poetry by Nicci Wall

Hand of Cards

The hand of cards life has dealt me,
Made me the person I am today.
I am neither rich nor poor,
In more than a monetary way.
I have a lot of love around me,
Through my family and my friends,
I draw on their support frequently
And when trouble brews I try to make amends.
In this way I consider myself to be rich,
I know many are not as fortunate.
Though things are often out of my control,
I've learnt to accept my Bipolar state.
Through the various experiences,
Mistakes and general daily life,
I've learnt so much about what is important
And value myself as a mother, daughter and wife.
I may take risks and be unconventional,
In what I allow and often present,
Sometimes you could be forgiven
For thinking my moods, like the weather, are inclement.
But this is the nature of the beast
Full of swings and round-a-bouts,
I'd rather be up and jovial
Than be depressed and down and out.
I am reaching inside of myself
To learn and grow and change
To better understand the beast
I have read an extensive range
These books give me the insight
Into what I can and cannot do
To one, help myself, and
Two, make it easier for you.

Poetry by Nicci Wall

Turmoil

Buzzing, whirring, yelling and screaming thoughts
Continually whirling around in my mind.
Confusion, fear, distrustful, aggressive and irrational moods
Often come in ebbs and waves.
Haunting words, sentences, images and memories
Prod, probe and drive this inner turmoil.
Heaviness, aching, lethargic, oppressive feelings,
Taking total control of my being.
Building walls, withdrawing, closing out reality,
The only defence mechanism logical for survival.
Time slowing, dragging, with the sunshine nagging.
The guilt and apathy sets in.
All movement, breathing, walking, talking,
Taxing beyond belief.
Negative, doubtful, defeatist, despairing,
Words come slowly from my lips.

The elation, alertness, inquisitiveness and driven behaviour
Experienced only occasionally, are all too rare.
Mind racing, self-esteem rising, head clearing,
Mood shifts from the black hole of doubt and despair.
Sleep eludes, senses heightened, everything is achievable,
The climb back becomes easier each day.
Conclusions, solutions, ideas, designs,
Flow forth without prolonged thought or prompting.
Physical tasks, desires, demands, requirements,
Barely diminish the fountain of energy.
Colours, shapes, images, scents and memories,
More vivid, enjoyable than ever before.
Love, humour, happiness and exhilaration,
Interjected into all and every experience.
Tales, plans, views, appreciation,
Tumble from the mouth at an ever quickening pace.

Poetry by Nicci Wall

Game of Life

As the beginning of depression slowly envelopes me, I have to wonder where it will all end,
I have been down this road before, so why am I taking this road again.
Encircled or is it controlled, by the belief I should ensure fairness and equality for all,
This weight upon my shoulders is too much, I ask for help, please hear my call.

This game of life that we play thwarts both friend and foe,
Breaking free from one tangled web, falling, limbs flailing, to another just below.
And so the circle starts again, having barely recovered from the last,
Trying to start life anew continually pulled back by the demons of the past.

Giving of oneself continuously, and in return being asked for more,
Physically, emotionally, spiritually, I have naught, lying spent upon the floor.
I struggle to compose myself, hoping to find an inner reserve,
Forced to consider inconceivable options and their consequences, but will I have the nerve?

To end this game much more is required, than I have left to give,
I want so much more than a mere struggling existence, I actually want to live.
Throw away what little I have left, on principles and a belief that I am right,
Or throw caution to the wind, praying the right choice was made each and every night.

Relight the Fire

I am taking the time to think about, what is right for me,
Instead of bowing to the unreachable expectations, of my family.
Important decisions about my life, are my own to make,
Give me credit for knowing, their consequences are also mine to take.
With every step in a new direction, an element of risk will be there,
I have never been one to do things on a whim, or without a reasonable amount of care.
My responsibilities and commitments, I most definitely do not take lightly,
And I no longer endure the type of behaviour, I deem as unsightly.
I am insisting on a better life, I will not accept the conditions placed on the one I had,
And for the chance to start anew, I know I will always be glad.
I believe the new road I have chosen, to travel with my kin,
Will hold all the positive aspects, to relight the fire within.

Poetry by Nicci Wall

Individuality

As the days blend into weeks
And the weeks blend into years,
I have found that I have finally lost
Many of my earlier fears.

Fears which I often found
Extremely hard to face,
Fears that constantly held me back
And kept people out of my personal space.

The impregnable wall I built around myself
Is coming down, albeit very slowly,
So that now I find as the days pass by
I am increasingly feeling lonely.

Lonely for the touch and warmth
And caring of another,
Lonely for the shared intimacy
Of a truly considerate lover.

Not for a partner who just sees
A relationship as sharing my bed,
But for someone who is acutely more interested
In what is in my heart and my head.

One who can share their feelings and fears
And be honest about what's on their mind,
One who is strong not just in a physical sense
But also very gently and kind.

One whose belief in what is honourable and right
Is not considered a slight on masculinity,
But instead seen as a personal strength
And have pride in their own individuality.

Poetry by Nicci Wall

So Alone

I am surrounded by friends every turn I take,
So why is it I feel so alone?
I love my children, they fill my life,
Yet I still feel so alone.
My Mother helps, listens and loves me,
But I can't stop feeling so alone.
I go out and socialise and enjoy myself,
Then come home and feel so alone.
I mingle with people like myself in the gym,
Wishing I didn't feel so alone.
I'm gaining more knowledge through attending school,
That doesn't stop me from feeling so alone.
My counsellor is helping me come to terms with myself,
She knows I feel so alone.
I'm buying a house for security,
I'll probably still feel so alone.
I want someone to hold me, respect me and love me,
Because I don't want to feel so alone, anymore.

Why?

Sometimes I question myself,
Just why do I go on?
What is it that leads me to believe
I always have to be strong?
Why is it that I push forward so hard
Leaving little or no time for myself?
What am I trying to prove?
Why must I make my presence felt?
Who am I trying to impress,
Or show that I am doing fine?
That I am more than capable of meeting,
The demands placed on me, body and mind.

Why is it so hard for me,
To let outsiders in?
So what if they see me lose control,
Surely that's not a sin?
Yes, I do need someone to care for me,
Someone to love and respect me too.
Why is it when I take that chance,
I get cold feet and tell them we're through?
Why is it that I am who I am?
And why are you, you?
The answers to these questions I will never find
And that for a fact I know is true.

Poetry by Nicci Wall

Test of Time

I want to tell you exactly how I feel
but the right words just wont come out.
The love I feel for you is a lasting love
Of this I have no doubt.
For months this love has been in my heart
But I could not let it surface,
I thought your heart was with someone else
And rejection was something I could not face.
So in order to keep myself in control
I put my energy into my lover,
But of a night, in my sleep
I dreamt I was in the arms of another.
It was in these arms I longed to wake
Each and every morning
And it was these arms I wanted to carry me to bed
When tired and fitfully yawning.
When I looked into your big brown eyes
I knew I had lost my heart forever
But I found myself looking away
Thinking that we could never be together.
Then you took me in your arms
And kissed me and held me tight
I summoned up all my courage and will
And said NO this isn't right.
I went to bed that night and could not help
But touch my lips now and then,
Wondering over ad over in my mind
If you would ever kiss me again.
I held you off for a few weeks more
And I meant to hold you off longer,
But the more I fought my feelings for you
The more they became stronger.
I wanted you in every way
A woman could want a man
And I wanted to give you what you need
In a way that only I can.
To stand by your side as your partner
Is something that would fill me with pride
And love would never have to be dragged from me
Because my love for you will never be denied.
So if you have any doubts
About whether we would pass the test of time
I'll tell you I look forward to when we're old and grey
And I'm still yours and you're still mine.

Poetry by Nicci Wall

Images

As I lay here beneath the trees,
Watching them gently sway with the breeze.
Images of the past flash through my mind,
Of people who were loving, warm and kind.
They say that good things never last,
Oh what I would give to change my past.
Look to the future it is bright and cheery,
I am afraid I could never see that clearly.
The future to me holds more heartache and pain,
More time for mistakes, guilt and shame.
I wish I could change the way I see my life,
I thought I was a good mother and wife.
Now after trying for all those years,
I find I am drowning in my own tears.
What have I done that was so terribly wrong,
I tried to fit in, I just wanted to belong.
But here I am all alone again,
I wonder if my life will always be the same.
I am trying hard to change who I am,
Not really being confident that I can.
I want someone who will love me for me,
But it seems the outside is all they see.
Oh what I would give to be these trees,
Spending all day gently swaying in the breeze.

Running Scared

I feel myself running from someone,
Yet when I look behind there is no one there.
But I keep running on ahead,
Not knowing exactly where to go or what to do.
Too scared to stop running,
In fear of what might happen if I did.
Deep down knowing that if I stopped,
I might actually catch up to myself.
For all the running I am doing,
Isn't from someone or something else.
The one thing I fear the most,
Is the real person inside of me, myself!

Poetry by Nicci Wall

Trying to Break Free

Look deep into my eyes
And tell me what you see.
What was that, a little girl,
Trying to break free.

A little girl so full of fear
Desperately crying out for love,
Wanting to be cherished
Tenderly like a dove.

Eyes brimming with tears
Of the loneliness she feels,
But her responsibilities and determination
Are what keep turning her wheels.

She is trying to put the past behind her
And within herself find happiness.
She can't afford to let things get out of hand
She's tidying up her emotional mess.

When finally within herself
She finds eternal peace,
That is when her true inner self
Will be dutifully released.

So please try and understand
There is not just one, but two of me.
The responsible, hard working woman
And a little girl trying to break free.

Poetry by Nicci Wall

Tormented

Tormented am I all the time,
By the things going around in my head.
Not a minutes peace throughout the day,
Not even when I am asleep in my bed.
Sometimes the genes passed down through a family,
Are not ones that you can easily bare.
The mood swings and depressions I encounter,
And the passing on of genes, I can not spare.
This was not brought to my attention,
Until sometime after my children were born.
The knowledge of what might be for them,
Left me shocked and feeling forlorn.
I will endeavour to make my children aware,
Of what it is that I have passed on.
So they can take it into consideration,
and decide if starting a family is right or wrong

Only Then

The sun was glistening on the waves
The breeze gently caressing my skin,
Passing thoughts of my life to date
Wondering in the scheme of things where it is I fit in.

There is so much in life I want to give
So much I would like to be given,
But there is always something holding me back
Something deep inside, yet to be forgiven.

Let go of the past girl
For only then will you begin to live,
If only I could make them see
Sometimes you can't forget and forgive.

I don't want to be this sensitive
I didn't chose to be this way,
Instead of getting stronger
I seem to be getting weaker every day.

Poetry by Nicci Wall

Valid Reasons

In time I know the hurt will heal,
And once again the outlook will be brighter.
Just as those who have known me well,
Will say that I have always been a fighter.
I try to confront my fears head on,
It is the only way I know how to get on top.
Sometimes I forge ahead in giant leaps and bounds,
But I fall very hard when my efforts flop.
But once again I pick myself up,
Standing straight backed and tall, as if with pride.
To the world outside I appear confident,
Having some form of special strength, to take it in my stride.
On looking deep within my mind and soul,
Most people are a little more than surprised.
This person who cheerfully greeted them each day,
Was smiling to cover hurt, not smiling at the world I despised.
Building walls around myself had become a hobby,
But not one I took on by choice.
A hobby I learnt as a child through circumstances,
Which would make even hard hearted eyes moist.
I believe I have many valid reasons,
For not wanting to continue to live.
And I would not hesitate to end it all tomorrow,
If I thought it was something my children could forgive.

An Attempt

I feel the suns warmth upon my back,
I see its gleam on the dew covered grass.
All around me things appear much brighter,
No longer does my life seem a farce.
I am making an attempt to change,
The things in life which get me down.
By accepting choices made by those around me
Maybe even choosing to leave this town.
Although I will no longer accept responsibility
For choices that were not mine.
I won't let the chance to have my say go by,
For then my efforts would be a waste of time.
So back into counselling it is I go,
Hopefully for the final healing journey.
As I plan on emerging from this bout,
A new person and mentally healthy.
And if by chance I don't succeed,
There are no promises it will be the end.
To counselling I will return once more,
And I am prepared to do it again and again.

Poetry by Nicci Wall

Unquenchable Thirst

Bright lights and star filled nights.
The suns warm rays and fun filled days.
A sigh of relief and happiness beyond belief.
With love to share and naught a care.
The wind on my face and plenty of space.
Green rolling hills and my happy pills.
Laughter in my ears and thoughts turn back the years.
A mind full of song, how could anything possibly be wrong.
Waves crashing to the shore and a lightness seldom felt before.
New ideas come to mind and answers are so easy to find.
Chores achieved so quick and retorts given with humour and wit.
No head stuck in the sand and happy to give a helping hand.
Willing to extend a loving cuddle and enjoyment found from jumping in a puddle.
Feeling rain on my face and transcending to a calmer place.
The ocean reflecting the blue sky and clearer answers as to why.
A merry-go-round in my head and no sleep when I go to bed.
The need to hold everything dear and future goals are now so clear.
An unquenchable thirst to learn and so much energy to burn.
To be with nature as one and swimming with dolphins in the sun.
Feeling the warmth from a fire and totally submitting to desire.
Final acceptance of myself and joy at my new found wealth.
Increased knowledge through experience and hindsight brings with it patience.
Good food and love for a healthy soul and loving oneself makes us whole.

With Hugs, Kisses and Rub Noses

So many things have happened in my life,
At twenty six, I am a daughter, a mother and once a wife.
One never knows how much damage a divorce can do,
And one can never begin to understand what you go through.
Before me stands, as what I see as the ultimate test,
Maybe being without their father is a turn for the best.
Although I remember well, the pain, rejection, confusion and distrust,
I felt as a child, when my parents' marriage went bust.
I've tried so hard without his help, to cover my children's needs,
But deep inside the churning of my gut, a silent warning heeds.
These children you love, shelter and provide for with full plate,
At some stage will blame you, with eyes so full of hate.
And no matter how hard you try, to replace what they have lost,
You will find yourself wondering, if it was worth all the anguish it cost.
Then the next day you're back at it, full of vigour all over again,
Even though it's not easy being a student, mother, father and friend.
For myself I have never, nor will I ever regret leaving him,
But now that he's shifted away, against the children I feel I've committed a sin.
I just hope that one day, they will see,
How painstakingly hard this was for me.
And they will look back and remember, even though I got tired, cranky and such,
That with hugs, kisses and rub noses, I loved them so very much.

Poetry by Niall Carroll

A Helping Hand

A helping hand each finger correlates to a healthy ingredient.
Utilizing skills making the best of opportunities.
Inspiring others and giving them the seeds to grow with encouragement!
Seeking the light on the horizon.
Honing in on future possibilities.
Recognizing strengths and weakness, focusing on positives.
Letting go of negative emotions.
The windmills of change turning a full circle.
Realizing the potential within.
Swinging in unison creating a pleasant and worthwhile scenario.
Engaging with others, indulging in positive feedback.
Forever the gift maker, creating success out of a solitary situation.
Establishing boundaries and realist goals!
Turning Mental Illness into mental Skillness!!!

Poetry by Floss

Sandy Beach

As we all sit around
Enjoying stories and things going down,
We wonder what the New Year will bring.
Lots of bright and happy things,
That is our wish.

But that's not real life,
Cos at some stage
There is always trouble and strife,
But oh my friends if we all keep near,
We will get through life with support and good cheer.

Poetry by Rowan Barber

Mixed States

I am enlightened or am I oppressed?
Am I manic or am I depressed?

I am cognitively reprocessing my cognitively processed thoughts.
I turn my noughts to ones then turn them back again to noughts.

I started up a company,
I hung out a new brass plate,
I'm so absorbed with destiny,
I determine my own fate.

I monitor my moods and keep the score upon a chart,
I love wifey with my liver so she cannot break my heart...

In deep within her womb there grows my Prima and Seconda,
what kind of world will they be entering? ah it makes me wonder!

racing round my brain again, chasing a wild transmission...
there is no way in hell or earth to offset this emission!
for heaven is a place but yet seems to me to be a time,
when elation and ridiculousness converge to be sublime....

I am enlightened or am I oppressed?
Am I manic or am I depressed?
more than I can chew in mouth and on plate,
how do I escape the snare of mixed state???

Poetry by Sharree Krause

"Little Bird"

I watch you fly everyday
So graceful, so smooth
Sometimes when I feel sad or down
I wish I could be you
Little bird, little bird
I close my eyes, shut real tight
Feel myself start to fly
So graceful, so smooth
I feel free, alive
All because I watched you
Little bird, little bird.

Poetry by Cassy Nunan

Mutation

1.
Blank canvas no light can dance on.
Dank void that no language warms
I am mute, my brush blunt.
I cannot...
I try to recreate the image of this whole.
My view trained on shades.
Straining for resolution.
A history of years swarms.
Events, a nest of wiry ends, snag me.
Once you pressed my on-button
And syllables flew.
There is no shut-down now,
Only hope for mutation.
I churn and turn in semi-circles
In search of creation
In words unuttered, contours un-trained.

2.
You lurk in the hallway with ideas
That, as your outer edge
Spun from your globe
I can predict, and will confound.
- We are plural and bound.

3.
My hand in constant reflex
Grabs the eraser to staunch a new flow
Of shapes that ooze love and perplex
This never-ending loop, as it loops.
Your foot on hardwood strides and
Just like that you are
Planted as a tree branches
On blue sky.
Beginning, end, both frayed
And raying, outreaching
Within sight.
A trick of light,
This mess dissolves as clear daze.

Poetry by Cassy Nunan

Winter sigh

Folded inside a warm winter coat
Embraced like a knuckle in a fist

Hope dies, living persists.

Perennial eternal fool
school of life dunce.

A thousand times done when
Learning ought be once.

Throughout the cold grey day
This coat's collar, belt, satin lining

Keep this chilled heart sighing.

Amazing

I am rounded up, pulled to, and lead the way by a
blind man who is programmed to only talk the walk
I am disoriented, but micro-chipped and the old software says
follow, until we are lost again and both furious, the anger fuelling me enough to
loosen myself and run.

This man who has no vision but a plot arrests me again in the maze,
recounting the old-school map he knows off by heart
continues to insist that he can see, knows a different route, is going somewhere in
particular.

Again I am pulled into his slip stream and we giddy around until
my energy depletes
to the extent that I wheel away then free fall, my soul backing up against the maze wall.

Nose neatly wedged in a tight corner
inhaling the stench of elevator music and extinct wallpaper.

Remotely above me is blue sky; quite a way beyond
an electrified perimeter.

Poetry by Cassy Nunan

Write something, right something

Invent a new word and scrawl it on the footpath.
Create a peace banner and hang it on my chest.
Write 'left' on one foot, and 'go' on the other.
Stand by, waiting patiently for the aftermath.
Spend my only life as an artisan scratching
scrimshaw into bones of frames for scaffolds
for masterpieces. Pray for patent protection, or an afterlife
and, wait for the plan's inevitable hatching.
Sledge stone, incise, align. With ten thousand other
slaves I join this chorus with the sky. Climb past breath
until with babble spit collapse I am revolting
with the very stench of hope
that someone will take care of me.

Poetry by Nicky Troccoli-Dennis

Motherless

The cemetery is bright tonight
The stars are crimson red,
I know where I should be right now
Sleeping soundly in my bed.
But I can't sleep tonight, dear mum
Can't stop my mind from thinking,
'Cause since you died I've been a mess
I've even started drinking.
There was a time when things were sweet
When I felt safe and sound,
But now your gone I just can't sleep
My head keeps spinning round and round.
I know the grogs what killed you mum
And now it's killing me,
I've gotta numb the pain somehow
I have to, can't you see.
When your mum died you did the same
You hit it pretty hard,
The grog, the pot, the sleeping pills
They were *your* emotion guard.
Now it's me, I'm all alone
It's sad, I know, but true,
I can't live on without you mum
Not now, and not *without* you.

Eternal Heartache

I am so numb
Can't feel a thing,
I'm hanging on to
A piece of string.
It won't be long
Till that string does break,
I'm living with
Eternal heartache.

Poetry by Nicky Troccoli-Dennis

Not Yet

Decision to settle
To calm, to stop,
To grow some patience
Let the penny now drop.
Took a soul search it did
Nearly busted my heart,
Could I grasp the idea
Of a brand new start?
But I look in your eyes
I sit by your side,
Try to go back in my box
But there's nowhere to hide.
I pretend not to be
A lot more closer to you,
Takes some patience alright
Got my soul feeling blue.
Want to hold you but I'm
Not sure how you will take it,
So I hold my love back
Now I'm trying to fake it.
Want to kiss like we did
When we connected first time,
But the end near I see
Oh, that kiss so sublime.
So who's to stop this here thing?
Is it you, maybe me,
Can we be lone again?
Or will we never be free?
Coz while it's like this
I do dwell in regret,
Should I wait or give up?
Maybe you don't want to yet.

Poetry by Nicky Troccoli-Dennis

Alcoholitis

If I go to the toilet
Will I flush myself down?
If I go to the circus
Will I turn into a clown?
If I hold cards in one hand
Will my other hand cheat?
If confusion sets in
Will my brain overheat?
If I lay here real still
Will I lose myself totally?
If this poem don't make sense to you
Will you wonder what is freaking me?
If the world should get the picture
Will the concept be blurred?
All of these thoughts
I have already heard (over and over again).
If I ask no more questions
Will I no longer think?
Man, my thoughts are all over
Need to get me a drink.....Quick!

Cat caught the dove

A dove in the sky
Brings a tear to my eye,
Cat can't capture that dove
And he doesn't know why.
A flight full of grace
Brings a smile to my face,
Dove is so high above cat
So he speeds up the pace.
Dove does fly in the rain
Cat can't catch, goes insane,
Wants to fly with the dove
But no wings, just a brain.
Dove now lost in deep thought
For that dove, cat did fought,
Look up, there he is
Now the dove has been caught.
The man I do love
He does fly like that dove,
I've no wings but don't panic
He is here in my glove.
"My soul is now yours
Without any laws,
So glad I caught you," I say
As I lick wounded paws.

Poetry by Nicky Troccoli-Dennis

Born

The petals of my roses are merely wilting away,
Dreams forever becoming destroyed right here in my face.
Freedom flew away without a thought for me,
My confidence now my enemy.
Love is too much of a burden,
Happiness merely a verb.
Psychotic thoughts come as freely as taking a breath "Aaahhh!!!"
I thought it was all around me,
Surprise, Surprise, I found it.
Way down inside of me,
Within the deepest realms of my soul.
Yep! Rage, Hatred, Mania and compulsive anxiety,
Let me out of this cold wet cage-like existence.
Disease and scars my proof,
Rejected from day one.
Some call this survival,
I say it's a battle never won.
Agony, fright and all things nice,
That's what I ended up made of.

Lost Freedom

Dull, Lifeless, Lonely and Sad,
Why do you think I'm so bloody well mad?
Why wouldn't I be?
Do you know my life story?
Plenty of guts, but no damn glory.
So tell me, please, where did I fail?
I've swear I've been closer to going to jail.
Don't get me wrong, I understand,
Just don't try telling me love is grand.
Aint nothing nice about losing hope,
I've had about as much faith as the pope.
Done all I could to get a life,
Been a daughter, a sister and even a wife.
I've lied and deceived, been honest and prayed,
Good or bad, no difference, still never been paid.
If there's something I've missed then show it to me,
'Cause I don't understand what it means to be free

Poetry by Nicky Troccoli-Dennis

Those were the days

Runnin' down Flinders Lane
Grabbin' Big M's and Bread,
The hot bricks in the square,
Done lovely for our bed.
Sittin' on the station's steps,
Unpretty all the same.
Some of us were deadset,
For the rest it was just a game.
Then there were the Users,
Hagglin' for a rought.
Even little runaways,
And girls who could be bought.
A lot of things are changin'
But one thing stay's the same,
If you look hard enough around
If you look around the City,
You can see who's to blame

Care Factor 0%

Crying till my eyes are red,
I can't believe what you just said.
"We're over now, it's not you, it's me,"
So angry now you've set me free.
Don't even care if I am sad,
Damn right I is, I'm raving mad.
I give you love, you don't want it,
Mister, don't you care a little bit.

Hello, Good-Bi?

Who is that girl?
My gosh she's sweet,
I've gotta know
We have to meet.
Look at her!
It sends your heart,
Like cupid hit me with a dart.
Who is that girl?
I have to know,
Oh no, she's gone
Where did she go?

Poetry by Black Swan

UNPREDICTABLE

Life is an Ocean
The treacherous sea of
Waves –

Higher than the eye can see
With an edge of calmness –

The calm before the storm
Upon it rides a vessel
That's forlorn –

As it struggles with the motion
Stoned face – no feelings – no emotions

It was just another foreign object
That the sea – the Ocean

Has again claimed so tragically

ANGEL (A mistaken gift)

She is so beautiful
So magically wonderful
So sweet and innocent

God sent an Angel to me
But Satan had other plans
When he took my Angel
Away from me
Angel has left
Five years and passing
The pain just won't cease

I'm sorry God
If I had mistaken

That Angel was a gift
From above

But not a gift

Poetry by Black Swan

"My Mystery Lady"

As I look back on my junior years
As I reflect on years gone by
I recall the trauma's and taunts
Of a young child's mind

But I will always remember
The school's "Mystery Lady"
Who pulled me by her side!

Her gentle soft voice
As she spoke to me
An understanding mind of a woman
To a troublesome child

As she opened her mouth
I felt a warm blanket
Wrap around me

If anyone could reach out
To a child in need
I knew it would be this woman
In deed

Only it was not meant to be
My "Mystery Lady" retired that week
And the next was deceased

The only chance I had
Finished before it began
"Oh" Mystery Lady why did you leave?"

"R.I.P My Mystery Lady – you never knew
The 30 minute impact you had on me"

Poetry by Black Swan

PROBLEM CHILD

You are a fruit cake
You are a fake,
Acting like a retard
Dealing the wrong kind of card,
The stories you tell are so real
How do you feel?
Do you know the difference?
In reality and make believe,
Does every thing you say
Come from some kind of play,
Do you know the difference?
In night and day,
Believing every thing you are told
You know you were that
“Problem child”
Is it in your head?
That you were born dead
You were the bad girl
Who didn't deserve a pearl,
Every thing you say and do
You know it is wrong
So why do you prolong
You know you are brain dead
You know you are lame
So why do you –
Continue to play them
At their own game

Poetry by Black Swan

HITCHHIKER

Where do you go
And what do you do
Why are you running
Is it them or is it you

Are you on the road to destiny
Or the road to destruction

How do you survive
The heat of the day
Where do you hide
From the cold, cold nights

Another town, another story
A body or two have been found
Were they victims of foul play
There is feeling of dismay

Lonely hitchhiker, do you show no fear
As you gamble with the road
And all it's load

Is each town a new chapter
Are you longing for an end
Or looking for a friend

Another truck rumbles past
Just like life it is moving fast
Have you been dealt
The wrong kind of card

As you shuffle your feet
And stick out your thumb
Sticking to the road
Melting in the sun

You disappear in the mid of the night
Looking for that ray of light

Where do you go
And what do you do
Why are you running

Is it them
Or is it you

Poetry by Black Swan

SUBSTANCE

(The ultimate love affair)

You came into my life
When I needed a friend
The first affair we encountered
Was suppose to be – just a fling
There were others before you
But who's counting
Because you're so different –
Different from all the rest
You are so pure and white
As soft as snow
And when the chips are down
And No-one's around
You are there my friend
You are there
When ever I need some one
Some one to understand
Some one to care
You are there my friend
You are there
For you are the only thing
Who has stood by me
and not
Judge me for who
I am
You ease both my sorrow
And my pain
So nothing else matters –
Cause you are the only thing who cares.
It's a shame you are illegal
And cost so much
Cause I have to be unfaithful
And say
This is the end of us.....

Poetry by Black Swan

A O K

I try and put on a front
And have a different mask
Each day

I try to smile and laugh a lot
With a weird and wacky way

I try to hide the hurt deep inside
I try to push it all aside

But the lonely emptiness
I feel within me
Is getting harder and harder
To bare

If only they knew the pain
Within me is more than
I can spare

There's nothing left for me to say
Except:

I try to smile and laugh a lot
With a weird and wacky way
It's my way of saying.....
I'm A O K

Poetry by Cath Richardson

AM I A BAD PERSON?

AM I A BAD PERSON
I DRINK TOO MUCH
I DONT EAT
JUST TAKE THE DRUGS THE DOCS GIVE ME

AM I A BAD PERSON?
I HATE BEING ALONE
BUT I DON'T HAVE A SAY
I MADE MY LIFE THIS WAY

AM I A BAD PERSON?
MY PARTNER IS BUSY
MY KIDS DON'T HAVE TIME
I NEED LOVE AND AFFECTION

AM I A BAD PERSON?
I HAVE AN ILLNESS
I DIDN'T ASK FOR IT
BUT I AM STUCK WITH IT FOR LIFE

AM I A BAD PERSON?
I MUST BE
I AM SICK
I CAN'T GET WELL
AND NOBODY CARES

AM IN A BAD PERSON?
I AM
AND NOBODY CARES
I MIGHT AS WELL BE DEAD!!!!

Poetry by Cath Richardson

Dreaming

What do I want out of life
Happiness
Is that asking too much?

Why do so many others
Get what they want
And I am left waiting?

I don't ask for much
Love, companionship
Maybe I want too much

All I want is peace
And happiness
But it only happens sometimes

Most people
Get it all the time
Why can't I be like them.

Why do I do it?

Why do I make so many mistakes?
What have I ever done wrong,
That makes me make mistake after mistake?

I know I'm not a bad person
Maybe confused at times,
But I keep making the wrong decisions

I seem to do it all the time
Make bad choices,
Then make myself miserable for days over it

Will I ever do anything right
Or am I doomed to failure,
For the rest of my life?

Poetry by Cath Richardson

HELP!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

I NEED HELP
BUT WHERE TO GO?
THE SHRINK?
HE WILL ONLY INCREASE THE DRUGS

I NEED HELP
WHO IS OUT THERE
NO ONE AFTER 5PM
THEY TURN THEIR PHONES OFF AND FORGET US

I NEED HELP
MAYBE I SHOULD
END IT ALL
BETTER FOR ALL, NO MORE PROBLEMS

I NEED HELP
NO BODY HEARS ME
I AM SCARED
DOESNT MATTER HOW MUCH I ASK, THERE IS NONE

I NEED HELP
PLEASE HELP ME
I DONT WANT TO DIE
NOT YET, I AM TOO YOUNG

Poetry by Cath Richardson

Something happy

In am single again
No man to lord it over me
Just what I want

I have a nice home
I am putting in things I want
Nobody can tell me off

I don't see my kids enough
But that is okay
They are leading their own lives

I know I am improving in health
And that is important
I hate being ill

Life is getting better
I know this to be true
And will only get better from now on.

WHY AM I HERE?

WHY AM I HERE?
TO CAUSE PAIN
OR JUST LIVE IT
I DON'T KNOW ANY MORE

I WANT FREEDOM
FROM PAIN
BUT THAT WON'T HAPPEN
NOT WHILE I LIVE

THE MEDS HELP
BUT I NEED MORE
I NEED LOVE
AND UNDERSTANDING

I CAN'T FIND EITHER
WHAT WILL I DO
END IT ALL
OR KEEP SUFFERING
I WILL KEEP ON SUFFERING
BECAUSE I AM TOLD
ENDING IT ALL
IS TOO HARD FOR EVERYONE ELSE.

Poetry by Cath Richardson

Where to now?

Do I keep seeing him
Or do I say goodbye
My gut says let him go

My heart says keep him
But I don't trust him
Which way to go?

Life decisions are hard
I could get someone better
But I am scared

He has influential friends
And he won't take it easy
I could be in danger

I do have problems
But he is not helping
He is making it worse

I need someone to care for me
Make me number one
I am yet to find him

He may not exist
That would be my luck
My life has always been messy.

Poetry by Cath Richardson

POETRY

TODAY IS HOT
THE WEATHER WILL NOT COOL DOWN
IS IT GLOBAL WARMING?
I DON'T THINK SO
IT IS FEBRUARY

TOMMORROW WILL BE HOTTER
THE WEATHER IS REALLY BAD
WILL WE ALL MELT?
NOT IF WE ARE CAREFUL
AND KEEP COOL WITH DRINKS

MAYBE THE NEXT DAY WILL BE COOLER
WE CAN ALWAYS HOPE
WILL THE CLOUDS AND RAIN COME?
I HOPE SO WE NEED IT
THE GARDEN IS DYING

IF THE RAIN COME
OUR GARDENS WILL GET A DRINK
OR WILL THE CLOUDS TEASE US?
THE PLANTS WILL SHRIVEL AND DIE
AND THE WORLD AROUND US WILL BE DRY.

Does he care?

Does he care for me?
Or is it only sex to him
I don't know anymore
I am so confused

I'm not allowed to see his kids
They no longer want me around
Maybe that is for the best
Kids and animals know

Yes, I an high maintenance
But he knew that when he took me on
Why then when the going gets tough
He does not want to know?

Are all men the same?
Will I ever meet my soul mate?
Where is he?
Probably watching the footy.

Poetry by Cath Richardson

I am not allowed at his house

I am not allowed at his house
I'm not allowed to see his kids
If I have done something wrong
Why won't he tell me?

He keeps secrets from me
He does not always tell the truth
I can tell when he is lying
It shows itself in anger

He won't talk about what is bothering him
He thinks I will get upset
But I am more annoyed
That he won't tell me

I am stronger than he thinks
I can take bad news
And the truth
I wish he would tell me

I am a different person from when we met
I can handle almost anything
Except lies
And deception

MY SON

WHY DOES HE ANNOY ME
IS IT DELIBERATE
OR JUST HIS AGE

HE DOES NOT HELP ME
AROUND THE HOUSE
LIKE HE USED TO

IF I ASK FOR HELP
IT IS LIKE ASKING HIM
TO SPIN THE GLOBE THE WRONG WAY

DO I EXPECT TOO MUCH
I DON'T THINK SO
A COUPLE OF CHORES ONLY

DISHES AND RUBBISH
THATS NOT MUCH
BUT IT MUST BE

Poetry by Cath Richardson

MY SON cont'd

I MUST BE WRONG
SIXTEEN MEENS FREEDOM
NOT WORK

HE WONT DO PAYED EMPLOYMENT
IT CLASHES WITH HIS
PERSONAL TIME

WHAT AM I TO DO?
GIVE IN AS ALWAYS
THAT IS EASIEST

IT IS NOT RIGHT
BUT WHAT IS?
YELLING, FIGHTING?

THEY GET YOU NOWHERE
HE IS SPOILED
AND I CAUSED IT

I ONLY HAVE MYSELF TO BLAME
I AM NOT STRONG
I GIVE IN TO HIS EVERY DEMAND

CAN I CHANGE THIS?
ONLY WITH INNER STRENGTH
BUT I HAVE NONE
SO I DO IT ALL
NO HELP FROM HIM
JUST COMPLAINTS

IF I WAS STRONGER
I COULD STAND UP TO HIM
BUT I AM WEAK

ITS ALL MY FAULT
HE RULES THE ROOST
HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

I LET IT HAPPEN
I LET HIM HAVE HIS OWN WAY
NOW I SUFFER

DON'T FEEL SORRY FOR ME
I BOUGHT IT ON MYSELF
NOW I HAVE TO LIVE WITH IT

Poetry by Sandy Jeffs

The Madwoman in This Poem

After Bronwen Wallace

The Madwoman in this poem
lives on the twenty-second floor of a block of flats
her husband and children gone
each day she waits for a letter that never comes
her wrists carry a flurry of scars
her arms are dotted with cigarette burns
every day she contemplates jumping.

The Madwoman in this poem
walks the streets reciting Shakespeare and Milton.
She shelters in bus stops and doorways
scrounges through rubbish bins
drinks from discarded beer bottles
begs for money to buy cigarettes
and a moment's respite.

The Madwoman in this poem
slumps into a ramshackle chair hiding herself
her large torpid body founders
her heavy breasts gush with a drug-induced lactation
her body grows with each anti-crazy pill
she reluctantly swallows.

The Madwoman in this poem
transfixes in front of the TV absorbing its many messages.
Ally McBeal is her daughter
Eddie McGuire can read her mind
Ridge and Brooke are talking to her
are going to come in a helicopter
take her to Venice to meet Brad Pitt.

The Madwoman in this poem
lives in a holy grotto
awaiting the Pilgrims.
She carries the burden of Eve
smells God in the toilet
sees the Virgin above the lintel
has given birth to the New Messiah
carries the secret of the Holy Grail in her heart
was raped by the Devil
sees maggots wriggling in her Stigmata.

Poetry by Sandy Jeffs

The Madwoman in this poem
is sure Beethoven stole the nine symphonies from her
cannot walk on the cracks of the pavement
can feel spiders eating her brain
fears her head is about to explode
is going to the firing squad next morning
is a character in a Bruegel painting
is an oracle of the dead.

The Madwoman in this poem
is Everywoman
is any woman
is a mother, daughter, sister, lover, friend—
the Madwoman in this poem —
is me.

Awakening - When we mad awaken

severing the noose of shame
lifting our heads high
drawing ourselves torn at heart
from the well of madness
shaken and battered
souls on the rack
our minds blown apart—

When we awaken from our mind-hell
and sit with ourselves in reflection
remembering the times before madness
showing our faces to the world haggard and worldly-wise;
when we reflect on all that has happened—
our minds losing their calm
our minds loosening the threads
our minds casting thoughts
that reap no understanding—
will the world be welcoming?

When we mad awaken
the mind-chains will fall
the dungeon door will open
out we will pour like waters unstopped
and all our madness of yesterday
will pale into a shadow
lost in the filtered light
of a new beginning.
Will we awaken brave and renewed?

Poetry by Sandy Jeffs

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Poetry by Lyn Mast

The Dark Room

Light is blinded by the darkness
The doorway I could not see
Life seems painful to me,

I did not want to be here,
Could not escape the fear,
Mental Illness is here.

It's not contagious,
It's not outrageous,
Why the fear?

Don't be scared of me,
Please someone care for me,
I just want my mind to be clear
Escape the fear.

My mind locked away in a dark room,
I know there's a doorway out,
Please someone open it,
Release me from the pain.

Panic overcomes me,
Anxiety is part of me now,
Just another thing to live with now,

THE PHONE RINGS

FIND STRENGTH IN OTHERS WHO HAVE FELT THE SAME.
LIVE WITH IT.
GET THROUGH IT.
GET BETTER EVERYDAY.
COME WHAT MAY,
I CAN GET THROUGH IT.

Poetry by Stuart Barnes

THE GARDEN

Blessed by magnolia, dusk,
Margaret and Matilda dance to Blackbird's plainsong,
his stave the faded wooden stakes, twine runners
supporting sweet corn, climber beans, cherry tomatoes,
a clef the scratch of the wind on the corrugated fence,
the tempo the revolution of the rusty Hills Hoist
impaling the bladed grass heart of the garden.

Ample bosoms bound by past twin-sets
adorned with mother-of-pearl, camellia-red
tremble at his treble. Faces flush
and blur as bodies spin, two dervishes
whirling beneath orange trees and stars.
Unadorned hands flourish, rhapsodic sighs fill the diamond sky
as Blackbird crescendos, flies to the ghost gum to roost,

his lullaby the music box *plink plink*
of shelled peas smacking the aluminium bucket
squatting between the silver-haired gardeners.
Cries one: "Have you-"
"The geraniums are farken pissed!" her mad twin howls.

On a concrete balcony Matilda's kneeling, sprinkling,
soaking seeds for the first time in a year.

POEM

Darkest, greenest sea in which
Questions skulk, at depth, like angler fish,
Puzzles aren't washed away on rips,
 π can be calculated ad infinitum,
And gods and monsters

Vie for my mind's eye. Into you,
One day, one day soon,
I'll plummet -
My icy answers, mysteries
Will rise like Neptune, be untombed.

Poetry by Stuart Barnes

SPIDER

To Ari the Israeli

Metallic black scratching the ceiling:
in an instant I trap you in a glass,
slide a sheet of card between the peeling paint, the clear.

(Thirteen years ago I would not,
I could not have done this; instead
screamed, trembled, spewed, pissed my pants.)

I examine you now, as an imperfect god examines man.
Raging inside your killing jar
you don't frighten me,
but as soon as I take you outside,
shake you onto the stale, hot, sordid January asphalt,
thirteen years ago come swarming back:

my rapist, the gloom,
the metallic black arachnid
spearing the cracked bedroom wall.

I crush you with my thong.
I'm wet with shock.
I trusted I was ready to let you go,

I'm certain one day I will be.

HAPPINESS

No Kyoto tidal wave,
The Big Black Hand's palm up,
To powders, poisons not enslaved,
No storm in this teacup -
Strange is perfect equilibrium.

FAIRYTALE

Once upon a time I wished
For nothing more than any man.
Now I'm older, wiser, blessed -
A man's the black on kitchen pans.

Poetry by Stuart Barnes

OEDIPUS IN FEVER, FOG

On Spenser Street, silence.
Like at The End Of The World.
With the slyness of mice his
Feet tread homesick footpaths while
The thick, grey gut of a beast
Whose one eye has been temporarily patched
Presses down upon street light, feeling
Alike. Everything dimmed, snuffed out - candle, candle - completely.
Where are the Clifton Hill mothers?

Their squeaking, shrieking phalanxes? –
OshKosh B’Gosh coffins on rodent wheels
Turning, turning, turning ...
And the bilious, balding babies, their
Mouths puckered like fishes anuses,
Eyes black piss-holes in faces of snow,
And cries, cries, cries of doom?
The Clifton Hill mothers are Camorra
To his Neapolitan quietude.

Across the footpaths nine-inch pods are scattered:
Some empty as politicians’ promises;
Others crinkled, cracked, like earthworms baked
Into January asphalt, their
Seeds exposed: stillborn seahorse embryos?
Strange, twisted snuggle-teeth? - their
Grins not emitting groans. He clutches one,
Shakes, shakes, shakes -
Less death rattle, more rattlesnake?

Tribal? Voodoo? He intakes air, the sort of air
A psychiatric ward might shroud. And everywhere, cloud, cloud, cloud.
The white noise of Clifton Hill mothers?
Or the death knell of early morning fog?
Fevered, he is sweating, flushed.
But his fever is not physical.
It never is, it never is, it never is.
At the dry cleaner he signs the Devil with both hands, palms up,
And hexes the café, its unwashed cutlery and coffee cups.

Poetry by Stuart Barnes

NEW BOOK

You're perfect:

Paper's full of life as a Technicolor dream,
Unsoiled by fingertips wandering,
No disease, no fracture of the mind,
Or scoliosis of the spine.

Words are pure,
Ideas lure me into
A world of no
Disguise, no black corruption,
Life gone dim, or secrets, lies.

You are mine, all mine,
Now I'm complete.

MORNING

Across the jasmine'd grey
And rust-red cathedral vaults blue
Notes rise: a Górecki adagio
Of ascending souls - this
Is their time. I
Sweep the stars back
Into their Jesus-shroud,
Cuff and collar the shrew
In the sickle moon,
Deliver the hypnotic peach-eye
Of the sun, and sit - senses
Agile as antelope -
At my table.
Soon the skies will fill with
Stretching white cats, traffic
Like Africa,
Technicolor hearts
Of hot gas, wattle-birds,
Magpies, soothing blue
Streaks from the mouth
Of babies - this
Is my time, my time
To revere, to breathe, to read,
To write.

Poetry by Paul D Robertson

Mundane Magic

In the corners of our sweaty palms, nested in the secret lines twisting bizarre and unique.

In the softest inane creak as the bones in our fingers curl. Longing, have you felt it in the tips of your fingers, pulling at the flesh on the inside of your arms?

Have you ever felt your muscles jerk – sudden and violent, overwhelmed for a moment by craving? Brutal. Irresistible.

It is a mundane magic – our own unconscious smile suddenly seen and caught, disarming and warm in a glimpsed reflection. As probability collapses. In the trickle of wishes at the back of our necks.

Beatific in hope; a frisson of what may be. If it might oh let it.

This magic – a mute spell of touch...the spell of the never-seen small of our backs pressed against the warm belly of a lover.

It is as magical as the scale, the startling magnitude of hunger as we kiss and kiss and kiss. Lips slippery hot against our own.

The immersion of lust... a moment etiolated a welcome trick of tongues that in this at least cannot lie – but it ends! – a click of white teeth on stained. Breathless and sudden and sticky. Saliva cooling on our cheeks in the night air.

The lock; the click of that skin pressed so easily with such lazy comfort.

I believe in never.

I believe in all the way.

Poetry by Larissa McFarlane

ODE TO STONY CREEK (my 8 year anniversary)

I went down to the banks of the Stony Creek,
To usher in my new year,
To thank the Universe for my eight yearlong journeys, which begins and ends today,
I was joined by Miss Dragonfly and her kindred,
and Willie Wagtail stopped by.
I blessed the four corners of the Earth,
The North, South, East and West,
I brought a candle for Fire,
Incense for the Wind,
Salt for the Earth,
and the Stony Creek brought the Water.
And for clarity I had my quartz crystal,
Found deep in the desert just over these 8 years past.
I let go of my hurts and habits,
And let in the joys of friends and lovers.
I forgave myself, and those around me, for expecting more,
And I welcomed in the peace of Acceptance.
I basked in the light of my creative energy,
Given to me in this moment of universal surrender.
And I thanked the Stony Creek,
for providing me with a place,
So that right here and right now,
Is exactly where I am supposed to be.

Poetry by Larissa McFarlane

DELUSION OR ILLUSION?

It has been said that we live a deluded life
That our sense of security is an illusion
That in reality, at any moment, any disaster could befall us
But so that we can live our lives without constant and therefore deadly anxiety
We deceive ourselves into believing the world is safe
It has been said that this is normal, even essential behaviour
Just like how our memory for pain fades, this delusion protects us
Sometime ago, I lost this illusion, and I have been immobilised with fear and distrust ever since
For seven years I have coached and coaxed myself in the art feeling safe
Always trying to trick myself into believing in this delusion
And although there have been moments of illusory bliss
Reality always comes crashing in
Paralysing my life beneath crushing fear.

But Today, with my fingers and toes crossed and my heart in my throat
I choose another view
The world just is
Neither safe nor dangerous
Neither just nor unjust
Neither good nor bad
The world just is
And anything is possible
But highly unlikely.

MY HOME

My home is in the clouds on a summer's day
My home is at the murky bottom of the Moonee Ponds Creek
My home has a garden with imaginary vegetables
My home is a secret, where no one visits
My home is like a tram, meandering with me through life
My home is a playground for purring cats
My home is on swings and roundabouts and monkey bars
My home is forgetting and remembering and forgetting all over again
My home is walking the city streets, under the blanket of night
My home is a hydrotherapy pool, where my pain floats away
My home is in the space between the canvas and the crayon
My home is in my wardrobe, dreaming of textures and tones
My home is being all alone, for days at a time
My home is being out and about, surrounded by it all
My home is in this human body, broken and contrary
But my home is also in the Spirit, connected and at one with the Universe

Poetry by Larissa McFarlane

I AM REBORN

This tension between the old me and this new me is sometimes a mask
Within this duality there are cycles
There are clues everywhere and coincidences anywhere
All the time, again and again, I am born and I die
I am as messy as a squashed raindrop, and as lovely as a shooting star
I was there at the beginning of time
But I am only a beautiful blink in time
Energy flows in and around and with me
Even my fingertips are more magical than I will ever believe
Ideas come and go, neither good nor bad, both heavy and light
They just are
There are versions of me everywhere
Just as the heavy grey clouds weigh down upon me
The sky cradles me, like a baby blue blanket
I forget a face, but I remember the words
Things are back to front and sometimes front to back
I turn things upside down to discover fresh perspective
I walk on my hands underwater to find understanding
But hidden deep in the symbols are cracks and crevices where the blackness caves in and
the light shines out
I concentrate on finding the connections
But for every link I make there reigns more confusion
But then, in the moment that I surrender
In the second that I turn away
I see the centre within the centre within the centre
The big blue catches me as I fall
I seep through
And I am reborn.

Poetry by Larissa McFarlane

So What Am I Afraid Of??????

What am I afraid of?
I don't know the answer.
Yet everyday I am smothered by the fear
And so I have created this invisible bubble around me
But does it really protect me?
It's true that sometimes it has helped me be invisible
If I can't be seen somehow the fear can't find me
But what if I don't want to hide anymore?
What if I want to live and grow and be like everyone else?
You see, I think this protective bubble locks me into a sort of stasis of time and place
I can't grow
I can't throw caution to the wind
I can't smell a flower
Or feel the sun shine
Or ponder a sunset
My bubble is not easily penetrated
But the illusion of safety is strong

So what am I afraid of?
Is it possible it is people?
But not so much what they will do to me
But how they might make me feel
Guilt, Anger, Hurt, Frustration, Self Pity, Shame, Exhaustion
Mmm
And so I protect myself from engagement with people
For fear of feeling
For fear of what might happen
But then all I feel is resentment towards them
For my (self) imposed isolation
And then all I feel is my own self-loathing
And my world in the bubble becomes messy and confusing and hurting
So does this bubble really protect me?
Is this how I want to live my life?
How do I open myself up again?

Poetry by Larissa McFarlane

There's something I want

There's something I want, I can see it, but can I reach it?

I am struggling to see what it is that I want,
Looking, looking
Trying to clear the way, do away with the mist and the debris
Trying, trying,
But what is it that I am looking for, what is it that I want?

Ahh, if I stop looking, if I can just rest, surrender and just be,
Then I can reach it,
Hang on, maybe I need some sunglasses, something to remind me to look with more than
just my eyes
But that's just a prop, a distraction, yet another excuse, another structure,
Just close my eyes and trust, and trust and trust,
And spin with the earth and sun and moon and stars
And feel the energy of the universe

Yes, I can feel it, I can feel what it is that I want,
And it is warm and soft and happy and loving and makes me smile,
And now I know that I can have it all, I can, anytime,
I will always deserve everything that I have,

And it is not my pain but my belief that I can't have it all, that means that I can't party into
the night-time.

With every realization, there is a new opportunity,
With every ending, there is a new beginning,
The King is dead, Long live the King.

Poetry by BlueSkyLady

Invisibility

(blinking in sunlight for the first time)

one day I finally saw it
that people weren't speaking to me
they were speaking past me
through me
they were speaking for themselves
that day I realized I wasn't who I thought I was
never had been
and I wondered who am I
am I invisible?
have I always been?

A brief discussion with disease.

(outer mother to teen alters within)

I know you are my darkness
I know you are my sin
you know while I embrace you
I just can't let you win
we are the poles of opposite
a star forming energy we two
I can send you roses...
but we know what you would do

Don't use me to hurt you.

(a realisation of wider Self in connection to journey of All soul)

Its not the cuts on me I see
Its the cuts they do but cannot see
Each word a swipe of careless blade
Across skin so worn scars never fade
Yet each hand of care truly extended
Means my walk here is nearer to ended
Slowly slowly bring me up
Not to spill a drop of this precious life's cup.

Poetry by BlueSkyLady

MPD

(a war between two of my alters)

you speak to me in whispers
yet you have nothing real to say
you speak to me in pictures
one's I want only to go away

you speak to me in tears of blood
in anger and in fearing
you speak to me in silences
echoed draughts too cold for bearing

you speak to me in hushes
in 'you're wrongs' and 'just you see's'
you speak to me in painful spites
ones plain as eye can see

I don't know who you are you spit
I'm tired of all this cram
I've got too much to live for
to die on your demand

I have tried to re-embrace you
tried to make you see
that in these worlds inside and out
you co-exist with Me!

You seem to think if I go away
You will be free to off and roam
Don't you get it yet you dill
I AM your only home!

So go or stay I'm tired
Go or stay I just don't care
Just go as far away from me
right now that's all I'll dare

Go away now I refute you
I don't want your bloody stones
my backpacks full
I've walked too far
and would rather be alone.

Poetry by BlueSkyLady

Love in the Void

(a piece of peace found within insanity)

In this numb in this tiredness in this state of despair
I find a silence I cant find around me anywhere
Its free from the stalking hunting ghosts
Of past and present and futures host

I'm done enough all gone no more
Only extinction now or blood on the floor
Bereft of joy of hope and of life
All's left is sensations borne from the knife

I cant I wont I don't want to anymore
I cannot not let it go, no not even once more

Falling dissolving disappearing reforming
All this activity, only to cycle again
To fall back to the pit of lies and shames
No left or right or even up down,
its all about the names

Suspended in silence 50 feet from the ground
This is how you've left us, left me to be found
A void of sullen emptiness to dark to dry to speak
Too scared of the shatter, too scared to live
Cowardly existing in silence at his feet

I loath the commotion I loath the empty street
Existing in nothingness, as honey for the thief
Only this wall of dim silence brings wind to the sails
Autistic emotions, a torn mind prevails

Poetry by BlueSkyLady

Desades Muse

(the pain of accepting illness...and the end of the struggle)

Set upon by demons darker than my own desire
I entered freely, willing. to deceive as much as grieve.
Lost longs long lost now departed,
Remembrances of vile natural purging
only fiercest reckoning consoles.

In light of my revulsion and in self imposed seated exile,
kneeling no longer to a barren throne
I fled to again to transcribe my life by acceptable means.
Seeking only that which was expected I would not recover
I pulled up short in any case no unexpected pleasure there.
I found my self abysmal lost despite my gains.

What once seemed pearl lies now rank with sadness crying.
Sap seeps like crimson ooze through fractured pore and shell.
It is my lot I lament
starved as I am acquainted. .
My hunger proffered fed,
for all pretence lays wasted.
Not sustenance to fill a piece,
a grey and slender meagre lot
to appease such gruesome fever.

I have come now to believe , only now,
that this life,
this unmentionable life
is inescapable.

This monstrous once adventure has now,
as with all nagging things in the world,
become a part of the very essence of who I am
or what I have become today.

Having used every ounce of strength,
every miniscule touch of intellectual presence
I once thought I possessed,
to try to reconcile this insidious hunger;
to banish it into nocturnal dampness
or embrace it in my light,
I have been thus far ineffective

and remain so.

Poetry by BlueSkyLady

White Fox Conscious

Stars and space cloaked in monks habit
I awoke to the view of the tree
stepped back in observant quietness
I see Him standing with me

In the shadow is darkness over matter
orange I see on its sides
I wonder for whom I stay silent
and what in the shadows does hide

Praying for perfect protection,
in the circle and hope of the Trust
I awoke one day the tapestry altered

who I had thought they were was me
or those I'd judged them to be not so
an none seemed to notice but me

In search of highest good and in all ignorance
I found myself passing Gabriel's Right
So unexpected and sudden
found myself in the lap of the Lion.

Both of us quite startled by the encounter
discreet wordless apologies
a single quiet breath
onward in movement again
into to the arms of the Love One
my cries and tears dissolving me then
Into the peace that envelopes me still.

In the darkness a child held the world
not wishing it fall end or die
One arm raised and outstretched awaiting
not willing to move an inch for proof of truth or lies

Walking the rainbow a waked One
in blue and red disguise
held my small egg light bodys outstretched hand
Awareness.
I see from new eyes.

A gift so precious and unearned
leaving me desperate to honour and meet
a penitent hessian clothed roped and sandled one
kneeling at unseen thrones feet

Behind it the square of Great Light
dissolving them through the stone of the floor
behind it they prostrate in earnest
and fall into who knows what or where for.

The room of golden princes
resplendent pleated their robes
Only to the belt could I muster my eyes
the darkened surrounds confuse
my presence there unsteady uncertain
a question unasked, who is thee?

Left to return in silence
Understanding but as yet unaware
A curious secret in whispers sung glorious
Concern for the colour of the hair

The peace and needless to say knowing
a burden in its own right
knowing is real and yet not so
yet still fearing the finality of flight

a question remaining in soulbound
a tremor in dark and in light
one I dare not answer
my son or my self in His light?

In pleading I knelt in my seeking
needing the proof once for all
are you there my dear Lover
or are we lost to the fall

I ask not because I am needy
I ask not because I am weak
I ask because danger bids move me
from my soul joyed place at your feet

are you there was the question I begged for
a white robed one on grey land stood
not a leaf not single blade of grass to give
from the soil my body could not surrender
until I sunk to the bottommost once more

oh dear spirit that fled me..go to the arms of the Just
seek only the God one of Goodness
and never look back not once.
If it pleases the master in mercy
that we be joined ever once more
will it be in the arms of the Love one
with the tree at His feet on the floor.

Poetry By BlueSkyLady

Hope

Eventually you grow up, something gives or changes, the clouds break and you just wake up one day and there's simply no room left on your body for scars.

The inside finally meets the outside.

Eventually you grow up and find you have no energy or time left free from study, work, trying to feed and clothe yourself and just getting by to to stoke the fire that is passion.

Eventually you grow up and realize that the only one your hurting - the only one you ever really did hurt ever- is yourself, and while you've been busy pissing your life up the wall, kids ten years younger than you have been getting their degrees, good jobs, lives and friends.

Eventually you grow up and stop burning every bridge you cross or work hard to develop.

Eventually you grow up and realize the world goes on with or without you.

Eventually you grow up and you stop wondering why the world isn't aligned to your view and start looking at the world for what its, in all its ugly and beautiful paradoxes and @#%\$ it if you dont start to accept it - and your place in it.

Eventually you start to want to live - by your own terms sure - but to live none the less, and if your lucky like me, you begin to use yourself to create not to destroy.

Eventually you grow up and suddenly you gain a new feeling about ugliness, and ugly just as suddenly, doesn't sit right on your skin anymore.

Eventually you grow up and if your mind is open, you can find new and better more effective, productive and arousing ways to give and recieve pleasure and pain than hurting yourself.

Eventually you grow up and start realizing that lonely, isolated, hurt, pained, and confused are choices you are actively making and responsible for - and to.

Eventually you grow up and realize there's better choices.

Eventually you grow up and understand suffering isn't the purpose, or the platform, that life, failure, sadness and pain can be embraced and aren't things you need to fear.

Eventually you grow up and realize you need people.

Poetry By BlueSkyLady

Eventually you grow up and you start, little by little, to find things to be humble and grateful for. Eventually you grow up and realize that all the blood and pain in the world, wont make it any better.

Eventually you grow up and if your lucky, you'll find that one person who wont enable you to stay sick, but wont abandon you to your sickness either.

Eventually you grow up and realize you were one cut away from really doing it....and that is frightening.

Eventually you grow up and realize that the world doesn't revolve around you. That despite how bad you feel, how sick or well you think you are, there's always someone sicker or more dramatic/popular/better than you...and that's ok.

Eventually you grow up and stop trying to make people undersand you, and begin to understand them.

Eventually you grow up and realize there are three truths, yours, theirs, and the facts.

Eventually you grow up and drama and attention seeking become embarrassing.

Eventually you grow up and realize no one ever will understand you - they dont have to.

Eventually you grow up and the want to harm is replaced by a want to heal and grow.

Eventually you grow up and begin your recovery, from yourself.

Eventually you grow up and realize that surrender leads to strength not loss.

Eventually you grow up and realize surrender is not about submission or conformity.

Eventually you grow up and realize how many amends you need to make, how many sorrrys' you need to say.

Eventually you grow up and realize your conditioning lied to you. Eventually you grow up and get angry about that...really angry.

Eventually you grow up and realize that your important, not unique.

Eventually you grow up and time becomes important.

Poetry By BlueSkyLady

Eventually you grow up and you begin to make choices that protect you, from yourself and your dark drives, as much as from other people.

Eventually you grow up and realize the only one that can make these choices- is you.

Eventually you grow up and your perceptions change, your views change, your values change. You change.

Eventually you grow up and realize your path really is, all up to you.

What I Would Do

Do you know what i would do
to you and you and you and you
do you know the stage of rage inside
would bury you in a bloody tide
i'd pull part your feeble minds
and scratch the insides of your eyes
i'd make you watch and make you wimper
make you stand there and shiver
gutless cowards gutless pawns
i'd make you scream and i'd just yawn
no words can save this fatal tear
i'd sink you in it make you fear
make you run like a frightened doe
make you beg, make you ho
run my fingers through your tears
and step by step walk through the years
of hell and hate and fear and rage
not skipping once, any line or page
make you see just how i suffer
make it plain its YOUR last supper
cut you in your phallic greed
make you pay and make you bleed
so careful those of evils tent
the b*tch is back and has intent
dont ever let me see you once
or your dead you f*cks
dead as a dogs lunch
next time you see a child to woo
remember it might be me who's watching you...
through her eyes or his or theirs
watching as you make their tears
learning better how to charge
how to spiral and scry at large
and when I call my minions through
remember I warned you..what i would do.

Poetry by Anonymous

Involuntary injustice

Being put in seclusion
Adds trauma to delusion
Feels like a criminal institution
No blame for running it all
Distressed I try
To make a phone call...
To the police
And you're dragged into HDU
Why I was there I did not have a clue
It ain't my fault I'm seasonal
Need a cure for the ills of the human race
I'm here on earth to take my place
Breathing in breathing out
Forget the freedom to simply walk out
I am too scared and all so aware
Of what goes on behind closed doors

Seclusion due to one's behaviour and reputation
Even to this day I do not know what they mean
I'm in a psychiatric ward
Who are they going to believe? Us patients or the nurses?
They pinned me down and injected me in both buttocks
'Mama Mama!' I cried out
They locked me in a cell for three hours
They would not let me out even to pee so I HAD TO SQUAT
In the corner pee on the floor
Nothing else in the cell except a plain mattress

The patients are all gifted and talented
Empathetic and supportive of each other
We are all trying to get better
We create bonds with each other
We have a deeper level of compassion
We have experiences vast arrays of hardship and trauma and trials
We have experienced many injustices
And are truly wise beyond our years

What did I do wrong I ask those nurses
I wake up at 5.30 and take a shower
I put on my make up and dress in clothes that make me feel good
I sit in the foyer couch and chat with some others
And have a cigarette or two in the courtyard before breakfast arrives
I help clear the breakfast lunch and dinner trays every day
I always looked forward to the food good and nutritious
I attend the OT meetings and join in on craft activities and walks

Poetry by Anonymous

I danced around to the music on the radio and to music clips on TV on weekends
Why do the nurses accuse me of dress and dance provocatively
The clothes I buy can be bought in any average clothing store and I see dancing as a way
or self expression and a passion of mine

I made it through but it is just the beginning of a long recovery process
Seeing clinical managers and rehab officers regularly
Doing the best I can given the circumstance
Attempting all options
Making room for possibilities
Trying to simplify my life
I had grown wise and know that my health is the main thing that I can not jeopardise
All I know is that I wish to be a mental health advocate
I wish to help and support others who seek it or simply be there to listen because I truly
understand...
I don't think people genuinely understand what it is like, unless it had happened to them.

Poetry by Ralph Nelson

Danny?

There's something wrong in our fair city,
"It's so well planned" and "looks so pretty",
There's an underclass of people here,
Hooked on alcohol, drugs and pills,
And there's a body laying still,
In that humpy by the hill.

I have a job, my life is full,
Of computers, e-mails and faxes,
"I'll be alright Jack",
If I just pay my taxes,
I go out on the town,
My wife is dressed to kill,
But weeks later,
There's a body laying still,
In that humpy by the hill.

We don't really know his name,
Because no-one really cared,
We don't go to that hill day or night,
Because we are way to scared.
There's homeless drunks and,
Hobos who are mentally ill,
And there's a body laying still,
In that humpy by the hill.

Remembrance

I see your faces in my dreams,
I hear your voices in the wind whistling through the casuarinas,
I feel your tears in the pouring rains,
I remember your smile when I gaze upon the beautiful rainbows,
To me you were real people,
Not just Government statistics,
You just chose to end your life early,
Because of the pain.

Poetry by Ralph Nelson

On The Inside

Something's wrong with my mind,
Happiness and smiles I can't find,
A sombre look always on my face,
Internal sadness, total disgrace,
Something's wrong that I can't hide,
I am always crying,
Crying,
Crying on the inside.

Sorrow eternal,
Sorrow internal,
Thoughts that shouldn't be,
What will it take to set them free?
No self esteem, no self pride,
I am always crying,
Crying,
Crying on the inside.

I can't express my emotions,
My internal tears would fill great oceans,
My brain won't work because it's rusted,
Forever injured by those I trusted,
Childhood abuse, most unkind,
Useless authorities, corruptly blind,
Something's wrong that I can't hide,
I am always crying,
Crying,
Crying on the inside.

Beyond Blue

Beyond Blue must be a wonderful place,
Full of people with a happy face,
No trouble here, just lots of fun,
No thunderstorms or rain, just sun.

What a wonderful town,
There's lots of help when you're feeling down,
It's full of birds singing,
And church bells ringing.

Lots of colours, silver, red and gold,
People help you even if you're old,
I go there if I could because my mind's full of crap,
I'd go real soon but I lost my map.

Poetry by Ralph Nelson

It's Time To Tell The Children

It's time to tell the children,
The truth about the war,
That it's not about religion,
With Jesus keeping score,
The war machine is out of oil,
And has to fight for more.

It's time to tell the children,
Why our politicians lie,
Why our factories scarred the land,
And put pollution in the sky,
Why we cut down the trees,
And why the creatures had to die.

It's time to tell the children,
The truth about the weather,
The truth about what we eat,
And turning animals into leather.
And how nothing will change
Till all countries act together.

It's time to tell the children,
To turn off the TV,
About how it can turn your life,
Into an unreal fantasy,
And no matter what they say,
Big Brother is not reality.

It's time to tell the children,
The trouble the world is in,
Time to tell about peace and truth and love,
And about the real sin,
About judging people by their actions,
Not the colour of their skin.

Poetry by Ralph Nelson

Heed Those Signs

Feeling unwell I was strolling along one day,
I saw a new sign – Blackcreek Swamp – STAY AWAY!
It wasn't there before, it mad no sense,
So I decided to investigate and jumped the fence.

It was a terrible place, as polluted as Hell,
With dead rotting ducks and a putrid smell,
As I walked past I heard a shrieking moan,
My senses went haywire, I wasn't alone.

It emerged from the water, a creature covered in slime,
A horrible Bunyip straight from Dreamtime,
It had four arms and a green grotesque face,
So I ran and ran to leave that haunted place.

But when I looked back there was nothing to find,
It was all a mirage, a delusion of my mind,
But I kept on running through the pines,
In the future I won't ignore those warning signs.

Some Simple Words

If I write some simple words,
Like the silvery moon,
The golden hues of sunset,
The sparkling shimmering waterfall,
The multicoloured beautiful birds,
They create pictures in your mind,
And if I give them to you to read,
They are yours to keep,
Forever.

Poetry by Ralph Nelson

That Bloody Black Dog

That bloody black dog won't leave me alone,
I wish he'd leave, I'd even give him a bone,
He runs through my brain,
Causing all sorts of pain,
He does tricks to keep me unwell,
I wish that dog would rot in Hell.

My doctor says he'll go away if I feed him pills,
But he never does, he just causes me ills,
He barks all night and stops my sleep,
When strangers come he doesn't make a peep,
He sh*ts on the floor when my friends come around,
He jumped the fence when locked in the pound.

That bloody black dog ruins all my fun,
When I want to relax he wants to run,
When I go out with my friends,
He follows me and paranoid messages he sends,
Sometimes it feels like he blocks out my sun,
I'd shoot that black dog if I had a gun.

Psychologist says "forget him get on with your life",
But that bloody black dog just causes more strife,
Perhaps he'll leave as I get older,
But I suspect he'll get bolder,
And haunt me till my dying day,
That blood black dog just won't "STAY".

Poetry by Ralph Nelson

Lest We Forget

Our ancestor's were brought to Australia on filthy ships in chains,
The English said "we'll take that land from that dark race, they have no brains",
What a great prison it will make,
We'll work them hard, in the sun they'll bake,
It's harsh over there but we can make some cash,
They'll build and farm or feel our lash.

We found some gold, "more people you'll need",
To dig it, transport it and satisfy our greed,
Farm sheep and cows, "get rid of those 'roos",
Enslave those blacks, their labour we'll use,
Hang on there, now we have a war,
We need your men, "send more and more".

Money trouble now, "Wall Street's gone bust",
You'll have to work harder to earn your crust,
Another war, more men we'll send,
But now thos Yanks will be our friend,
"You need more people to stop attacks",
Bring lots of migrants but, NO BLACKS!

We've gotta new bomb now that we need to test,
To do it a Maralinga would be the best,
Cold War, "you must hate those comies",
Your only friends are Yanks and Pommies.
Go to Asia and fight more wars,
To stop those reds "it's for a good cause".

Trouble again, yellow refugees in boats,
They come and come on anything that floats,
Change some laws, they're now our "Multicultural friends",
They'll help the economy on which our life depends,
Oil trouble, "Saddam's taken Kuwait",
Now it's those Muslims we'll hate.

We send more troops to join the fight,
Watch the bombs on CNN, both day and night,
Terror error, here comes more trouble,
World Trade Centre reduced to rubble.
Let's get revenge on Afghanistan and the Middle East,
"We'll wipe out Saddam, he's such a beast:.

Refugees in filthy boats causing more pains,
"Lets lock them up and put them in chains".

Poetry by Michael Nanai

Nine to Five

I hear the husbands cursing and beating their wives
I walk the streets and all is contrived
I arrive home where emotions are tense and cold
I remain delightfully optimistic about what the future will hold
I go to school in the morning
Ominous and anxious of violent warnings
My teacher says I'm different and treats me with disdain
He is the welcome that society brained
Decades later I'm in Australia
More violent welcomes of the previous tailor

Pain and sufferance is my bread and butter
The guff sounds out with birds a flutter
Groomed and preened searching for god
My innocence and purity soon to be lost
I start to muddle my way through
The sun is beaming and I have no shoes
Certainly no a man in thine eyes
Bolster up my muscles and in time
The neighbourhood gossip is like wildfire
For the coming of manhood has been aspired

I tell a story in my sleep
As if holding a symposium for all to see
I feel sick nauseous and bewildered
Someone has taken something I need
Rebirth of delusion imitated in my past
Inhumanity and degradation is the moving task
On the horizon hope renewed
Speak to me
Me but who

Wading through murky waters
Feeling an array of stalkers
Shining moments blissful and sweet
Those were the time when I my wife and son meet
Holding the strain of compulsive bureaucracy
Being the expert which supports my autonomy
Life is simple without complication
Being diagnosed is a foreign entrapment
Oh what joy when my son was born
My marriage designed as a triumphant torch

Poetry by Matthew Closter

Untitled

In a bad frame of mind feel like a lost child,
put on a fake smile it's been like this for a while.

So loose got nothing to lose n nothing to prove I'll be a ghost soon,
just a bad memory who overdosed in the 21st century.

People payin you out behind your back,
suicidal thoughts come and you don't look back.

Untitled

Every dream of every night gives a fright.
It's either fatality or can't tell if it's reality.
Sit in silence n see silhouettes in the shadows.
Listening to the music of ghosts, have a beer n call a toast.

Poetry by Raymond Westwood

I Ask Myself

Sometimes I go through a day amidst difficulties,
And I ask myself how did I ever cope.
It is then I realise that the lord has set me free,
At a time when I needed him most.

Sometimes I go through trials and tribulations,
And I ask myself how did I ever manage I don't know.
The I realise the lord has set me free once again,
To lift me up and to set my heart aglow.

Festivity

I love a festivity, it inspires much activity.
I just love a festivity anytime.
I love a festivity, it brings so much tranquillity.
I just love a festivity any day.
I love a festivity, it provides so much variety.
I just love a festivity anywhere.
I love a festivity, it excites so much gaiety.
I just love a festivity yes I do.
I love a festivity, it brings so much serenity.
I just love a festivity yes indeed.

Poetry by Damien Cardamone

Smiling

Life started to smile at me today, or it has been a long time since I noticed it.
I realized it was smiling as I took comfort in everything around me.
All the birds danced around and above me.
My coffee tasted like the best one I have had, and people made room for me.
It's only a revelation now as I start to open my eyes again, and so is my heart too.
I love the air I breathe and everything seems to come in kindness, and best wishes the way I like it too.

As I rose from bed this morning not a tear in my eye.
From all the years I didn't look inside this heart of mine.
I realized there is only time to waist looking back in the past I hope to see the World someday, and I'll start from my very home.
My smile didn't take much to lift, as my mind and heart smiled too.
I love the way people move on the street like a waltz of street life and laughter is great when it's happy and not cruel.

Parents

Parents that dote don't take for granted.
As we journey through life and seem to bare a new coat and grow out of our time with age.
Our parents are seemingly always there helping us find our way.
It may seem too much as it often does,
but having a child to raise must be a connection un-losable
and so easy to think of even if your on the other side of the world
we feel their words on the phone,
or in their presence we feel love even if we see we have outgrown our childhood.
A medal for our parents made of bits of our heart,
and memories from our mind.
I can only see a good side to family
as I wish it would stay and should be strong,
the love between people, a gift of life.

Poetry by Keith Perry

After The Honeymoon

Is it possible for the marriage of two minds to occur?
To occur without obstruction to the interchange
Of thoughts and emotions, to change with circumstances
And to flex with the winds of time.

Or does it experience tempests, but never shakes;
Is it an ever-fixed, unalterable union!
Or does the stronger lay claim over the weaker?
Will it forever control and rape at will?

Will it be left open after the honeymoon?
Will all and sundry active minds enter at will
And exercise influence? What will the stronger mind?
Do to this now subjugated mind?

Is it that the stronger mind leaves after it's finished?
And couldn't care less or even remembers?
The weaker mind has this infliction for life.
I pray thee this: is there no justice for the innocent?

"But I never knew this,"
Twenty years of psychiatric treatment later:
He has either learnt to live with it or
Is on medication for the rest of his life...

Poetry by Keith Perry

I Snapped My Cap

I had a mental break-down, I snapped my cap!
Yes, I gave into the screaming heebie-jeebies
They locked me up and took away my tree
I fell victim to the Mental Health Act

I had my own room, the one with the two-way mirror
The nurses looked at me, even as I slept
The drugs did their job eventually
They stopped the voices and the visions.

No more could I see with my mind's eye
No longer could I talk with my mind's voice
No more could I do battle with the forces
No more could they invade my mind

Everything looked so rosy. Everything looked OK.
Then they electrocuted my brain
Wako! No more mid-term memory,
But I didn't notice that until its mentioned 20 years later

Ask any Psychiatrist how they diagnose and they might tell you
"Ah, you get a feeling for it over the years."
The treatment is sometimes 'hit or miss'.
The effects are often for life.

Poetry by Keith Perry

Ten Minutes in the Life of a Drunk

Perfection is my subconscious world.
But the world is not perfect.
My drive is great, but hark! A dilemma.
A great frustration takes control – do I fight back?
I sling out at those who threaten my state of mind.
Bloody pigs, they don't understand my needs.
They stop me dead in my tracks.
Those that are bigger than me are either cream puffs
Or they whip me. Oh for someone smaller or weaker:
I'll show them. I'll even up the score: Just you wait and see.
See how big I am now?
I might impress this girl and she will see just how big I am.
She won't be able to resist me then.
Just a minute, things aren't right.
Ah, here's another beer, that's better.
Now where was I? Tell a few dirty jokes and she'll be mine.
Wait, what's this? I don't know why the barman is looking at me.
Ha, ha, I don't need him. Stuff him.
It's hard to understand
Ha, ha, look at that. Stuff you!
Yeah, I have to show this bird how important I am, hah!
Let's have another beer.
That sh*t won't matter. The Mongrel.
God I need a smoke. Hey give us a smoke.
Gee I needed that.

Poetry by Keith Perry

PITFALL

There's a burning desire deep in my soul
Fired by societies' shackle-hold.
I am a man, there's not much I can do in this role
For they've damaged my mind and in my heart – a hole.

There is a counter drug in my medication
Put there by my enemies without provocation.
When I'm in hospital they lose their motivation
But wait for my discharge to self-appoint their allocation.

For I am mad – for I am insane
What a ghastly feeling to know this and to accept this innate.
Only birds of a feather can be counted as a mate.
Or risk being ostracized at any rate.

I believe I gave my life in the service of my fellow man.
Or was it megalomania
Or perhaps as harmless as paraphernalia.
I gave it my best shot and it ran.

Now there s nothing left – just my empty shell
Now there is nothing left – just my personal hell.
Will the time ever come when I'm well?
To shake these bonds would be swell.

Poetry by BeadingGirl

True Spirit of Humans

You call me selfish.
You name me a crybaby.
The scourge of the Earth
is what my status has become.
I have no right to my feelings,
I must constantly explain myself.
Death is imminent for me,
because there I will find peace.
The survival mode I function in
is called coping with a disorder.

I try to treat others as humans,
and my heart gets stomped on,
mashed down and beaten into
a state of complete foolishness,
due to your trademark of cruelty.
I think you and the entire world
would be better off with me dead,
than me barely living and existing.
Sucking up valuable dollars and energy.

My Presence is Undeserved

You don't deserve me around you,
You always want to control me.
You don't always know what's best
Or have my best interest at heart.
It's all about you.
It's all about payback from me.
You've given me much grief.
You've caused me great pain.
I don't like being around you,
Because you always want to reign.

I sometimes hate who I am.
I hate who I've become.
I'm a mirror image of her
In your eyes, that's who I am.
I am her child, her twin.
I embody everything you hate
That was present in her.

You don't deserve my presence.
You don't deserve any part of me.

Poetry by BeadingGirl

Self-Mutilation Mutiny

I'm told I mutilate myself.
What kind of sh*t is that?
All I do is chip away
my pain and frustrations
By breaking away the
outer layer of my being.
The world is cruel and mean,
it makes me nervous and cry.
If I must harm something,
Why not harm me, myself and I?
Who really cares?
The world certainly doesn't.
I'm a blip on the goddamn screen.
I'll continue to bruise,
chip away and cut myself,
until who knows the f*ck when.

Stigma

Cock-sucking b*stards!
How dare they suggest
these drugs to me, ME!
Sobbing to the depths
Of my demented being,
I realize I'm one of them!
Yes, one of them now.
Will I be monitored?
Will I be followed?
Am I weak to have fallen,
and have sunk this low,
to be like everyone else?
It must be me, I am weak.
But something's not right,
We all know this to be true.
But I can't get past that thing,
The stigma, it still lies there.
Parasitic and attached to me
I can't drop those records.
Severe depression.
Suicidality.
Unbelievable it is,
The shame of it all by some,
The ludicrousness is there.
The suffering is immense,
And the inner external voice
Of ridicule and resistance,
Haunts my being and mind.

Poetry by BeadingGirl

Ticking Time Bomb

No one hears,
the fire,
the ice,
burning & freezing
the whole time.

Nobody cares,
about the urges
to die, die, die,
we carry as we
walk about each day.

We are the outcasts.
We are sick people.

Nobody listens to us;
our cries,
our pleas.
Thy turn on us,
turning against us.

We are left to survive.
We should be alright.

At night we suffer,
During daylight, we weep.
We suppress our desires,
for hurting others we love,
and sometimes ourselves.

We are the outcasts.
We are sick people.

We are left to survive.
We should be alright.

The keys only lock right,
After we have snapped.
Only then do they question
the validity of our pleas
when it's too damn late.

Poetry by **ROBERT PIERSON**

I Can't Explain

I'm sorry I can't explain to you
As I myself don't know why
Every day I feel like this
I wish in my sleep I would die

I hurt so much inside
I can't forget this pain
It clouds up my mind
So I just don't feel at all sane

I wish I could just end it all
This thought is in my mind
I wish I could explain to you
But the words I can not find

I see nothing to keep me here
Nothing but the end
I wish I was more stable
But confusion is my only friend

To see the day though
It's hard to get out of bed
I know how I will feel
The thoughts that swim inside my head

Forgive me if I leave you
For I just need to escape
For it is no fault of yours
That depression is my mate

Life is not a easy thing
For this I can see clear
If death chose to take me now
Then peace will be at last near

I'm not afraid of the other side
Of what may come to pass
I have been to hell already
Now I try but to hold fast

Will tomorrow again I will rise
Again I feel like this
Again I will push on
But the end does promise bliss

Poetry by ROBERT PIERSON

I wish I could have told you
And then you would have known
But when this feeling grips me
I just wish to be alone

I'm sorry I can't explain to you
As I myself don't know why
Every day I feel like this
I wish in my sleep I would die

Knife's Edge

For all who may chose to pass
Stop and help our minds are glass

Aloft and full but prone to break
The choices then can be a mistake

For those who hold dear a name
We are sorry to have caused you pain

The choice we make may come to surprise
But you did not know the thoughts behind these eyes

For those of you we leave behind
No fault to you for what's in our mind

Whoever you are this must be known
The choice is ours to die alone

Be free of pain guilt and doubt
Use your friends to help you out

As you try now to understand
I offer to you a helping hand

As life to us a twin edge blade
Mistakes are abound in the choices made

You are not to blame for what we do
So understand this we don't blame you

Poetry by ROBERT PIERSON

Tempo

Life for us a roller coaster ride
A hill climb before the slide

Into the valley that is despair
Never tho do we stay there

Before to long we climb again
When we fall it's a terrible shame

But fall again we always do
And that's what I'm telling you

I will switch it no fault of yours
At lest our life never boars

So please know that life
To us is a twin edge knife

When it cuts it goes it deep
Then the energy we can never keep

It's strange to live this way
Maybe there'll be a cure one day

Until then you see us as we are
Mental illness leave a lasting scar

I guess what I'm trying to say
Is for us there is no other way

The only concrete guaranty
There is for those like me

The highs the lows they come on fast
At least we know they will never last

Poetry by **ROBERT PIERSON**

Untitled

Today is the very same
As the ones I have known before
I find the feelings still in me
I don't want to step out my door

Yesterday I closed myself
To defend from the world around
And I know I'm safe this way
Yet a crack in my wall was found

Tomorrow I will still be here
I know I will survive
Because tho I'm not proud to say
My fear will keep me alive

Today I meet new friends
I'm surprised they accepted me
Can I still hide who I am
Through this will they see

Yesterday I hid behind the light
Of my friendly computer screen
This is the way I communicate
As a safety net it's been

Tomorrow I may change myself
Or I may stay the same
But now I can tell myself
New friends now know my name

Speaks For Itself

D is for that feeling of Despair
E is for how it follows you Everywhere
P is for the Pain like a drill in your mind
R is for the Reason we are stuck in this bind
E is for the Ease we can forget who we are
S is for the Speed we can fall so far
S is for the Slope that makes us pay this cost
I is for the chance of Innocence lost
O is for knowing your Only going to be alone
N is for Not knowing if you'll get home

Poetry by ROBERT PIERSON

Unlike Us

For all of you that help us
We thank you for being there
If the truth is in ones actions
You have shown us you care

You may never understand
What it is we go through
But it really help us so very much
To know we can count on you

We reach out in our time of need
You catch us when we fall
What could we do with out you there
Could we get up at all

Life is for us
Ever changing every day
It's nice to have your guiding hand
To help us again find our way

To fall off a steep cliff
It's good to have your aid
See climbing up alone is hard
With you progress is made

We all die in the end
This fact no one can dismiss
But with you helping us fight
We may chose not to hasten this

Postscript

For All that have come this far
A little further you must go
The end is never far away
Of this we all must know

But you must understand
Why we feel alone
As it's hard to live in a city
And have nowhere to call home

Our minds are not the same
Nor our actions seen as right
But this is who we are
This is our private fight

Poetry by **ROBERT PIERSON**

Tempest

I feel as though I am a train
With an engine but no breaks
I need to start slowing down
No matter what it takes

But I'm heading down a steep slope
And there is ice on the rail
I must come to a stop
But on and on I sail

I try to cut the speed
But speed I cannot lose
What should I do now
I need more time to choose

It must be time to use the breaks
I must begin to slow
But if they don't work
I will crash, of this I know

Come now, slow yourself
Says the voice inside my head
Slowing down is the goal
But I find my breaks are dead

I'm never going to stop
If I can't even reach the ground
I must start to get some grip
But my wheels keep going round

I'm speeding down this track
The edge of sanity I skirt
If I don't stop now
When I do it's going to hurt

I'm now becoming desperate
I'm freaking out inside
Please let me slow
Let me off this ride

Now I am frantic
I'm losing all control
If I don't slow down soon
On a corner I will roll

Poetry by ROBERT PIERSON

I'm looking down the tracks
I know this is the end
I see the worst is there
I see a sharp bend

But the wheels keep turning
Soon the track they will miss
Then there will be trouble
But I can't stop this

Now I come to the corner
Time slows to a crawl
The wheels can't hold on
Now there's not track at all

I hit the ground sideways
But still I'm gaining speed
There must be something I can do
Clear thought is what I need

The train is on its side now
But speed it gathers more
I will have to bail soon
I can't stay with what's in store

I look out the window
To see the rocky ground
If I stay I know the deal
But if I jump my flesh they'll pound

Now what is there
I can do or I can say
The train has now
Truly run away

I guess there's nothing
Neither way I will survive
Best I ride it to the end
Or take a quick swan dive

I welcome you now
To what happens in my brain
And think on how it feels
At the helm of a runaway train.

Poetry by ROBERT PIERSON

Iron Clad Chest

I put my heart into a box
And turn the key on as many locks

On this box that I can find
Maybe this will help my mind

Perhaps I'd best make it lead
Close my heart make it dead

Cut it out so I do not feel
Then my world would seem more real

Nothing could hurt me then
Until the time I wake again

But never wake again I say
As I think about yesterday

Shut myself up so tight
Close my eyes so that I might

Fall asleep under a dark sky
Till I'm safe again to open an eye

To find the world is no longer gray
As I have forgotten yesterday

So I take from the box my heart
And I again am no longer just a part

For I'm once again whole
Maybe one day I'll attain this goal

Poetry by ROBERT PIERSON

Filtered Light

The night may belong to you
But the day belongs to me
And as I wake to see the sun
I know I can myself be free

But a problem lies in that
If I don't meet the coming dawn
Then the prison of night takes me
And I earn the days scorn

So if the sun does not rise
I must fight to bring it back
As I can not live forever
In a prison made of black

But the darkness fights again
To keep itself alive
So I must use my light
To break out of it's hive

And the force to darkness then to flee
Make it run away and hide
For only once this is done
Am I the master of my mind

Then I meet a rising sun
And the dark will go away
So I will feel safe again
In the light of a new day

And I can breathe free knowing
It can not hold me near as tight
And walk in a new bright day
So then I need not fear the night

Poetry by ROBERT PIERSON

Shadow's Of Life

I wish to tell you now
This feeling is nothing new
And one day you may wake to find
This feeling can take over you

You will know if ever it does
And wish to be alone
As when this feeling gets inside
It makes itself at home

Maybe then you will know
And understand our pain
So imagine what you would feel like
If you knew it would happen again

To feel so very worthless
Like there is nothing you can do
You will only want to cry
And stop from feeling blue

And if you find yourself on your way
To a sharp utensils draw
Find yourself the keenest blade
And even up the score

This feeling still won't leave you
It just won't go away
If your very, very lucky
You will wake in a medical bay

But even then it will not flee
And maybe you will find out why
No matter how clean the cut
Away it will not fly

And then the world will look at you
And label you insane
But here you will be welcome
Here we know the pain

Poetry by **ROBERT PIERSON**

A World Alone

I'm sorry if I retreat
Back inside my shell
Right now there's too much pain
Right now I feel like hell

So now I may place
A very sturdy wall
But I'm standing on a cliff edge
No harness if I fall

I can't begin to say
Or express how it is I feel
So I shut out everything
With what I hope is an airtight seal

I feel as if I'm in a scripted play
With playing cards as cast
The wind is blowing so very hard
I'm disappearing fast

I feel now that the end
Is all that's left for me
It won't come quickly enough
I need to be set free

I'm sitting in a tiny cell
No windows and a door
I can't close it fast enough
I don't want to feel anymore

I need to shut down
There is far too much at stake
If I don't do it fast
I know my mind will break

I want it to be over
I'll just feel like this again
You have to know the attraction
Of a drill bit through my brain

At this time I'm not sane
See I'm not me at all
So I hope that this will end
Or here I will fall

Poetry by ROBERT PIERSON

I'm writing this now
As I'm here in despair
Hell is the place I'm at
With my feelings laid to bare

If I don't get help
I will take myself clean out
This will keep setting in
Of this I have no doubt

If I do leave behind
Friends of whom I care
To you I apologise
That alone I left you here

The end it beckons me
I wish it would take me and go
The pain would be over then
Of this I'm pleased I know

I'm sorry that my brain don't work
The way it is meant to do
Maybe then I'd be ok
Even normal too

Why is it that I feel
Like a ship with out a course
Maybe I'd best trade places
With a glue factory bound horse

As I write these words
And I see each one is true
Understand it's not your fault
For what anything I do

As I do hope my writing
Will keep me from actions dumb
I can not begin to tell you
How much I wish I were still numb

Poetry by *ROBERT PIERSON*

Questions

If you held you life in your hand
What would you choose to do
Would you keep it or throw it away
Into the ocean blue

Now if you could squeeze it tight
Watch the liquid drain away
Do you think you could do it
Or would you choose to stay

Would you hide it in a box
And never let it free
Is this the path you would take
Do you think it is all you could be

Maybe you'd put it on a shelf
Out of sight and out of mind
And leave if forever looking down
On a world it could not find

Or frame it to place on a wall
Keep it where it can hide
Only those you let in your house
Will know who you are inside

Perhaps you'd sit it above your bed
Watch it as you dream
And sleep a weary day away
And think of what you could have been

Now what if you chose to make it a book
For all the world to see
Let others unknown judge your life
And know you were all you could ever be

Poetry by Peggity

When I Awake...

When I awake refreshed at break of day,
When the melody of magpies has begun,
Before the din of traffic starts to hum,
I don my shoes and walk down by the bay.
And even when the joy has gone from life,
I still recall times past, my childhood years,
Full of laughter, free of cares and fears,
Full of friends and kin, and free of strife.
We played as children, carefree in the sand,
No thought of morrow ever on our minds,
So now when hopelessness of love lost finds
Me despondent, walking on the strand,
Remembering, in remembering I find peace.
No life is worthless that has known such grace.

In Praise of Music

Music is sweet balm that soothes my soul.
Soft and low it lulls me to a trance.
Sublime crescendo makes my spirit soar.
Fast tempo drives my itching feet to dance.

Music falls upon my ears as sweet
As wine upon my lips, or a soft kiss.
Music is like gardens after rain,
Or blessed harmony of true love's bliss.

Music is like mercy, chastity, such virtues,
Pure and clear and gentle as true love.
Music makes me full of joy or melancholy,
Reminisce with sad regret or soar to heights
above.

Music is the sound of the tide lapping
On the sand, or roaring of the surf.
Music is the wind-swept trees wild-swaying.
Music is the sound of laughter, sparkling mirth.

Music haunts my dreams, and in the morning
The singing birds wake me to tuneful song.
Music makes my poetry, my passion,
And in life's stream it carries me along.

Poetry by Peggity

Rainbird

I hear the rainbird singing as I hear the soft rain fall,
And my heart is singing too as I listen to its call,
For it's months, and maybe years ago, the last time that I heard
That sweet sound. Crows had frightened every other bird.
Then, when rain came back again, first the magpies came.
Then the rainbow lorikeets flew in with the rain.
Up under my gutter water flooded a dove's nest.
Now surely the drought's over. Rain falls on green grass,
Flowers are blooming brightly, and the rainbird's back at last.

Poetry by Peg Mack

Optimism

What does it take to heal the pain
Of a broken heart and a shattered dream?
My doctor gave me E.C.T.
And fed me dopamine.

But chemicals don't heal my soul.
They only fog my brain
So I can't think of goals to plan
To give me hope again.

To hell with pills and E.C.T.
I'll fight my own way out of sorrow,
Scorn artificial means to conquer grief,
Make active plans to face tomorrow.

Poetry by Emma Maclachlan

A girl is rebelling
Activating anarchy
Spitting on a world
For her persona
Her psyche is recoiling
Like a starved snake
Drinking the venom
She hopes to be blessed
And once again soon
She is back to a lunar consciousness

Can't say goodbye
Can't say hello
Why do I feel like this?
I have knowledge to know
It is hopeless
Can't admit
Loved by ones I fear
Only I want to keep held
And so escape into fantasy

A dense mass of heart
Falls to shatter heavily –
Even on feathers.
The pieces scatter,
Each time more is lost,
Then, so light
That it floats,
Dreams
Not to take on anything
With no sustenance.

Where do I go?
Will you befriend the lost child
Who has grown only for your benefit?
Truth is obvious
Feeling is dubious
Haunting,
Hating,
Believing a fairytale
I dance.
A solemn cry
In your eye
Is interference.

Poetry by Emma Maclachlan

They told us to go forth
To live and achieve perfection.
Their gleaned wish made focus
They said it would make us very happy,
Well, I say, someone took my share,
Someone greedy,
Someone said
Who daily hates to feel jealous
But wouldn't give up their statue on any
Account,
While I kneel
At their heavy right foot and
Like a pigeon
I make my throne there
And like a pigeon
Sh*t all over it.

I can't refrain from wanting.
My yearning turns to exceptional ambition.
It can manifest as dedication
But I seek only distraction.
My days climb mountains
While the mind stabs down and in,
Ritually performing
Soul suicide.

What's wrong with fantasy
It makes dreams come true, doesn't it?
Living another's beauty
Makes for a playful time,
A dance for soliloquy
Caress the movements, the movements
Lithe, the stunts depress
Into alien formation.

Now it's out
And moving, we are
In opposite directions
Until (If the time is right)
We can experience delight
That festers
Until we are barbaric,
No longer a spoken language
Of purity.
Not at all.

Poetry by Emma Maclachlan

I think that I shall go mad.
Yes, quite crazy.
Save some time.
Let those have it,
My sanity,
They'll have it.
Take my dreams
Streamers at a party,
Have I nothing to give?
Play my emotive, my lover,
Like a lute,
Sounds for your pleasure.
Are those highest notes
The sharpest wails?
My love is creasing,
Folding in its own envelope.
I WILL KILL YOU
AND MAY LEAD YOU
TO ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
I MAY MARRY YOU
To truth.

For reality is too much to bear,
Acknowledgement you'll miss in the
Rembrandt of another.

There is a thin girl in the
Mountain of roses, a waif.
Under the cold sky she looks
At the light in the window.
She is pale. Touched she was
By life, now infected numbness
Spreads along the arm she cuts
For feeling. Call the doctor,
Give the drug that fights
The darkening, ply the poultice
For the poison of rejection, quick. She fades,
She walks on eggshells, pirouetting
In the gutter she twirls for no-one,
Rib-boned slippers scuffed
And dirty Cinderella, the belle is balled,
The prince is bored, glass carriage shatters,
Stallions change to rats and scuttle
In the shadows, snarling fogs devour the
Reasons for tomorrow, she fights enchantment
While the sorcerers decide
If she is sane.

Poetry by James Martin

Once in a while
I want to cry
Twice in a while
I want to smile

Two smiles, one cry,
Two joys, one try.

I try, too.

Poetry by Cath

The sun is shining
But a black cloud follows me
It makes every thing dark
I can see no light or happiness
I know I need help
But where will I find it?

The sun is shining
The black cloud is becoming smaller
Am I getting better?
I can't answer that
Maybe I am
I hope so.

The sun is shining
The black cloud is almost gone
Is it the drugs?
Or just that I am getting better
I hope I am improving
And the black could does not reappear.

Poetry by Julie Hunter

A Breath

The cloak of night surrounds me
And in the candle-lit darkness
I feel warm, safe with some,
Old comforting self.

The reassurance from my truer self
Wraps a coloured cloak around my soul
And it is within that
I feel smart, wise, delicate.

First light comes over quickly
And I make sweetened milky tea
I feel like oats with full cream milk and honey
As winter approaches.

My Doctor

Happy Birthday for November
Merry Christmas for December
Holidays maybe for January
School back
My Birthday
The month of May
(no more blood tests)
The first month of Winter
Hibernation months, July & August
Time for flowers, September
Lets both have a German beer, October

Business on the Ward

He waltzed
I smiled
We spoke about my sexuality
Not right away
Was the way.

I smoked
And showed the hair
In my armpit
So much for play

I played quoits
He watched
I perhaps hit my mark
Towards the end of day
Was the way.

Poetry by Julie Hunter

Script

Sometimes I'm good
And sometimes I'm bad
And sometimes I'm in between
And sometimes I'm mad.
And when I'm mad
I take it out on the world
And sometimes to the point
Where I regress to being a little girl.
And while that anger stores in me
I take it out on no one
Particularly.

Are you Sad?

In the deepest darkest depth of my heart
I am.
Last night, yesterday,
I found a ladder
And put it up against the wall of my heart
And started to climb.
I found a ledge
And stopped to rest
Looked up
And saw the light.

Poetry by Jane Siberry

I live in the hulls
You live in the valleys
And all that you know are those blackbirds
You rise every morning
Wondering what in the world will the world bring today
Will it bring you joy or will it take it away
And every step you take is guided by
The love of the light on the land and the blackbirds cry
You will walk in good company
The valley is dark
The burgeoning holding
In the stillness obscured by their judging
You walk through the shadows
Uncertain and surely hurting
Deserted by the blackbirds and
The staccato of the staff
And though you trust the light
Towards which you wad your way
Sometimes you feel all that you wanted
Has been taken away
You will walk in good company
I love the best of you
You love the best of me
Though it is not always easy
Lovely? Lovely?
We will walk in good company
The shepherd upright and flowing
You see.....

Poetry by Bevan Sallaway

Dealing with Feelings

As human begins with many feelings
Some real, some unreal,
some referred to as old baggage or learned behaviour.
Dad punches mum out and kicks the dog,
And says I am useless,
So we believe it,
Our self esteem suffers
So we develop negative feelings about ourself
It's learning to recognise the true feelings
And unlearn the unreal feelings
Most of which our brain sees as perceived feelings or fears
Anxieties, fear of fear itself
And learn coping techniques.
Sort the negatives from the positives
Build on the positives.
Of course its all in your head
Chemical imbalance, drug induced psychosis
So that's where to start retraining
The thought progresses, it aint easy!

Happy, unhappy,
Mad, sad,
Joy, euphoria,
Ill-determined

Regression, depression
Obsession, possessed,
Wanted, unwanted.

Success, failure,
Leaders or followers,
Strength, weaknesses.

Elation, frustration,
Elevation, castigation,
Satisfaction, gratification.

Failure or success,
Setting goals, goalless,
Determination

Deprived, survived
Mature, immature,
Secure, insecure.

Stable, unstable,
Believer or agnostic,
Teachable or unteachable.

Anxiety, panic,
Tears, fears,
Aches, shakes.

Achiever, non-achiever
Believer or non-believer
Holy, unholy.

Self made or unmade
safe or unsafe,
True or untrue.

Rights, frights,
Sorrow, horror,
Fights, flights.

Lazy, hazy,
Energetic, non-energetic,
Can't try, must try.

Poetry by Russell Phillips

A Beer at the Pub

I wanted to give you a poem
I wanted to sing you a song
I looked to the horizon
The setting sun
The twinkling stars
The dawn
Toward a new day.

There was a moon
There in the way
There was a tree caught in a sway
Distracting me in a worldly way
It seems we are here to stay
It should all come to an end
Some say quite soon.

Purified my heart here cries
The life we live
The time we give
The warbling magpies
All the copying creatures
The pig sty's
The borrowed ear.

I have drawn from the clouds
A rain that brings change
A floating chance
Brought on the wind
An angle counted
The fire of eternal rage
The deluded crowds.

Five and seven
Seven and five
Those before
Those in between
Within this boundary for discovery
All numbered and formulated
Surrendered to adapt this means to be.

Poetry by Blue Sky Lady

I'm sorry Sir did you mean sputum?

too well for the sick people too sick for the well
lost in the terrible somewhere in between.
lots of people making good wages in the MHI
lives being lived at our expense
fires of industry
cremating care

patronising platitudes
no single sense of awareness
only blame only judgement
...fewer good people in now
and fewer and fewer every day
because they cant conscience it either
they know too
all care no responsibility
politics that blame - is there a service for that?
a quick drug cure?
care to fix that for me?
in or out
submit or go
the convenience of literature
the tools of avoidance
doesn't let you see their eyes and feel their faces
its all in the conversion.....
blame you drug you condemn you hate you
f*ck up your brain
brutalise your body
now go fix yourself
be responsible
be - good.
....its all in the conversation

i was already good.

Poetry by Blue Sky Lady

Thank you

lots and lots of human resources, few resources though
only avatars without any source within them
and then there's the evangelical
believe everything mob
lie ourselves into another deceit shall we
all belief and no experience
no truth
only manipulation
what's another few more deaths in the interruption of paradigms

the absence of humanity
stark
so obvious
the horror realisation that this may actually /be/ humanity
too cruel an irony
too heavy a weight
too deep a sadness

like a specimen in a jar, examined, prodded, weighted, poked and discarded
everything but what is needed
asylum
care
protection from it....
protectors who /comprehend/
someone anyone who really knew
real help
simple words for deep understandings
lamp lighters
its just not there
not in here not out there

no one even asks what it is anymore

everyone "caring" without an ounce of care
only control only fear
budgets
words squashed twisted misrepresented misinterpreted
used
no dictionary
only assumptions

great plaques and papers all over the walls but no one lives up to them
words and paperweights
go elsewhere
live elsewhere
we cannot help you

Poetry by Blue Sky Lady

help yourself
all talk
erratic action
confusion
everyone's tired
no one admits they just don't know and are too afraid to ask
acting like they share some great secret perspective
a higher vision
they really don't
overwhelmed
just claiming ownership over pulpits
and the few that do know,
the real gems
they know what to do and don't do it
they can't
they are not permitted
they are afraid of standing up

locked in a world where for desiring respect
for desiring honesty in treatment, for demanding professionalism
hey for demanding professional duty period, you are made evil
a world where health is harm..
illness is wellness
the Being just metaphorical concept

the disease the talker taker and winner
souls locked in wards behind don't look curtains
demanded to perfect by the imperfect who set themselves up as perfection
two weeks speaking to no one
but this is therapy
this is goodness
no..its not.
b is for blue not blind betty

even in this sphere they listen to the majority
to the loud noise
the loudest
symptoms treating symptoms
they ignore the needs and presence of the voiceless
hello can you see us waving?
they ignore those that can't speak even if they wanted to
the truly patient
the true patient
they do not know it
they do not see it
they cannot hear the real victim

Poetry by Blue Sky Lady

instead they listen to the insane
base judgment on it
build policy out of it
carefully weight and measure responses by it
never realising the cost the loss
the lie
the utter insanity of doing that
they call it community support
research
in the absence of community, it is just brushoff
is a sentence
it's an abdication of responsibility
an unwillingness to shoulder authority
to be the buck
to take the risk of being wrong
leaving treadmill hearts passed by passed over p*ssed on
treated like rodents and tested on....

don't mind my right to live
don't mind my brain getting in the way of your pharmacology experiments
expedient helplessness
timely surrenders
institutionalised powerlessness

i needed the trustworthy authority
i need the locked door
the safe space
secure
i needed the Will to do what is needed
not my own usurped
i needed authority empowered
not my own upheld when it was useless to me
i needed the safe place

now there isn't one
not in there not out here
not anymore
its all unknowable
its all unreal
forced based
fear based
exhaustion inclusive
containment of the soul
...by the deliberately self blinded
a vegan sol forced to eat meat

Poetry by Blue Sky Lady

unhuman rights where no one is responsible
except you you bad thing
forced enclosure alongside forced disclosures one would never make
willingly
consciously,
wilfully.
when your face is the disease and they only see your face
how well can they know you
yet this is what illness relies on
how come they don't see it?
how come we do?

the blanket capacity of professional distance...
"care" devoid of any semblance of real emotional humanity
two helpings please....no three.
everyone afraid of the truth, of speaking it, thinking about it knowing it
lesser peers simulating disgust of the unpositive the unpleasant
aloof from the real..from matter..from the things that need to be said
and these are my 'helpers'

judged and judging from the minute perspective
never even aware the skin they slice
the wounds they leave for flies and emotional maggots
the shame they bring to my table as gifts.
the doubt they leaved wiped on my towels
the sadness
yet i must not cut tut-tut no no
that is badness silly girl..
so i stand by at let you do it for me, and you do it deeper than i have
ever gone before
yet that is wellness
it's prescribed
its 'sane'.
its shame bared..not once aware the rawness of soul
the meaning...the intent.

a subjugation of spirit they are enforcing and condoning in ignorance
not once considering for a second
not one second
the person
the un-same
the glorious different
the song
the head they've cut off from the spirit
in full flight ignorance of the one who has never said a word
no
not one at all.

Poetry by Blue Sky Lady

i understand it now
a lot better than i did
about playing the tune and dancing along
about blind ignorance and liars
a warehouse full of dudgeons walking in circles
where no one ever loses his musical chairs
because there is always an extra chair hidden away
no ending no beginning
a curse this denial of justice
no accountability...
nothing to rail at...
no one to take it away
only the spite
and the spit
and the remnant of we the unreachable
the unhelpable
the unmasterable
symptoms of the creators' vengeance
spirals on spirals
and those of us that cannot be ridden of the antipathy
the true protector of our humanity,
are just spat out
in anger criminalised
in desperation pathologised
and in revelation
murdered

We who will not die quietly

We are supposed to trust, yet every time trust is given, it is abused.
We are told to accede to your authority, your wisdom, as if our own meant nothing.
We are supposed to speak up, share our views, to talk to someone, but every time we do
we are belittled shut down, made to feel small, ignorant or deluded.
We are supposed to ask for help, only to be told no help is there for us, which leaves us in
despair.
We are drugged, emaciated in spirit, then left to our own worst devices undefended.
We are told we must, we have to, we will ' or else', purely because you say so.
We are given conditional assistance, more so correctional, and only so long as we play the
game and be as unreal and as shallow as you.
We are told we must be accepting of our illness, our defects, our disease, our limitations,
our deficiencies, yet we are expected to act normally, think normally, be normal....like you
are.
We are told we have the power and the obligation to be as you are, even though we don't
want to be like you, even though we know who we already are.
We are told to create and define our own reality, but every time we do we are punished for
doing so, ostracised and attacked for doing so, then told we are in denial of THE reality,

Poetry by Blue Sky Lady

with what reality "really is" left unspoken or undefined because you, simply don't know anymore then we do.

We are told we have a loving spirit worthy of respect within us, yet we are disrespected, patronised, dismembered in grief of its absence and ritual theft.

We are told to have faith, yet when we do and share our experience, we are ignored, condescended to, laughed at, pathologised by the blind and deaf.

We are told to grow up, that we are the ones who are immature, this, by the unborn, the hairless, by infants.

We are told we have no choice, that we are sick, we are wrong and the world is right, that to think another way is sickness, is egotistical, wrong, self-deception, aggrandizement, evil, yet you still get to choose.

We are told that we too, like you, must to lie to ourselves about the truth of what we see, hear, feel, and know, to tell ourselves the same lies that have been swallowed by others in order to 'live in harmony'.

We are told we have a fear of abandonment, rather than simply more experience with it...a resignation of its inevitability a wise fearing of the sadness and isolation that it compels.

We are told what is normal, is abnormal. What is right, is wrong, what is easy, is right and all else must be ignored.

We are told we are moody, that our emotions are incorrect, unacceptable, wrong, bad, that yours are superior, better, more acceptable, more socially acceptable, told to embrace your fears of yourself, your emotions, of your darkness.

We are excluded from our own care completely, imprisoned, excluded, marginalised and ridiculed as ill-informed or hostile or else we are handed our own care back in lump sum, whenever it gets too hard for others to manage what we never asked them to manage in the first place.

We have fought all our lives to live, to simply live, that and to save nurture care for and protect the soul within us, only to be told to ignore that sacredness, to get a job, to shut up and play along, to pretend, to be good according to the social collectives idea of goodness. We have had our understanding stolen from us, debased and trampled upon, replaced with bling, with verbs and add words and screaming mantras of blind faith and illogical non reason, with gobbledegook and sadomasobabble.

We have been forced through sheer human fear of humiliation, isolation and imprisonment to accept your view of love as lust, of greed as welfare, of trust as manipulation, of good as evil, drugs as medicine, knowing full well they are not, but remaining unheard in the strange noise that continues to blanket everything in futility, in shame and unspoken fear.

We are supposed on. We are assumed on. We are told not informed, we are excreted on with the demand present that we accept it, or accept our own and our worlds, eventual suicide.

We are the poverty...of the product of poverty.

We are and remain for one reason and one only in our eyes. My last breath will not seek to inform you of it.

We have been laughed at, shamed, diseased and terrorised, yet you may laugh and sneer and pontificate all you want and you will not harm us one moment, as we know only one thing, and know it well....You, are not in control.

Poetry by Caro

Bipolar with Borderline Thrown In

I suffer from Bipolar, with Borderline thrown in,
You'd hate to be my neighbour, I can make an awful din.

I scream and shout and punch things, I go completely mad,
My husband takes to drinking; he thinks HE'S got it bad.

I've thrown a suitcase thru the window, screamed at the 'boys in blue',
I've walked miles in my pyjamas, blaspheming as I do.

I once gave myself a black eye, I did it with my shoe,
I've stopped the car in roundabouts, to see what people do!!

I screeched around the corners, hit the 'left' sign up ahead,
Got yelled by an old man for screeching, he saw red!!

I abused a girl out shopping, thought I should be behind bars,
My Case Manager had to tell me, not to sit in front of cars.

I overdosed in Sunshine, the Psych was so damn pissed,
He was a wanker anyway, I really do insist.

I've cut and hammered arms and hands, and slammed them in the doors,
Burned my hands with lighters, until they had big sores.

So what's my f*#king problem, am I just a fool,
Watch out for my husband, at the bottom of the pool.

I maybe just a nutter, who is a selfish b*tch,
I've been called a thing or two, but here is my final pitch.

I've been diagnosed with a mental illness, that's profuse,
You are just a f*#king c*#t, what is your excuse????

Poetry by Christopher Lance King

Our Pride

Come and greet my Nanna in a respectable way
Come and greet my Nanna for it's Nannas 90th birthday
Nanna is so very happy on this wonderful night
For we've come to celebrate party with delight
Look at Nanna now with a smile upon her face
Loving every moment in this wonderful place

Back in 1920 Nanna Loraine King was born
She battled hard the life she had just to make a coin
Nanna King lives to be the eldest of the Paakantji Tribe
Nanna has a lot of respect Nanna has a lot of pride
Nanna has six children she loves them all the same
Uncle Riochard Aunty Patsy Uncle Larry my father Kicko
Aunty Gail then baby boy Uncle Shane
Loving all her children five generation have been born
Still Nanna battled along just to make a coin

Now we've come to celebrate also bring a little gift
Also give our Nanna a happy birthday kiss
Now it's time for Nanna to cut the birthday cake
Also make a birthday wish that isn't also fake
Blow out all the candles Nanna and every single one
Now we've come to celebrate now the parties begun
Make a wish for Nanna make a wish so proud
Sing out happy birthday Nanna sing out very loud
Happy birthday Nanna with a birthday you will remember
Happy birthday Nanna with a birthday you will treasure

Lots of Love your grand son Christopher Lance King

Poetry by Christopher Lance King

Enjoy Their Luck

Welcome Robert Pagano who is happy with delight
Celebrating his 22nd birthday with nanna King tonight
Robert was born in 1988 on nanna King's birthday
What a very happy moment for Sharon and Patrick that day
That very day when Robert James Pagano was born
Was the temperature very cold or was it very warm
All we know is that Robert was the greatest surprise
Before Sharon and Patricks very own eyes

Robert has three sisters he loves so very much
Always living heart to heart always keeping in touch
Always keeping in touch Robert misses Decoda and Drae
Just to have his kids around would make Roberts day
Roberts had a lot of changes throughout his life
Now he has another girlfriend he calls his wife
Welcome to our family Jasmin has she smiles
Living hand in hand with Robert could take a while

So Heavenly Father who looks down upon us
Let us party hard all night and make no fuss
May family and friends get drunk and very pissed
Celebrate and party hard is a very good wish
Let all the stars shine let all the fire light up
May Nanna King and Robert Pagano enjoy their luck
May Robert and Jasmin have a love they will treasure
Happy birthday Robert laugh and don't be shy
Happy birthday Robert you really are a wonderful guy

Poetry by Helen T Okey Jnr

Realisation

I am coming back to realisation,
I am finding me, slowly I am.
Coming back, knowing more this time,
Illness, mellowing,
Mind clearer, thinking right.
Still crazy sometimes, but aren't we all,
My life is coming back,
Settling my mind.

Night Time

Moon shines love,
Stars, brightness.
Brilliance of the night,
Animals awake.
Nocturnal living,
We shine at night.
Play roles,
Poem writers of the night.
It's me, a servant to this madness,
Of the night.

Madness

Madness from every part of my being,
Confusion of the mind.
Sanity is there a sign,
Madness on the outside for everyone's
seeing.
Intrusion into the mind,
It creeps, it seeps.
Destructive killing the balance,
Unbalanced to the person it meets.
Trying to make sense,
In a muddled mind.

Faith

God you're in me, within every one of us,
Giving us the strength, love in our hearts.
There's so much we can give,
If we all found our love inside.
And gave it to someone in need,
World peace would happen.
Because we are capable of such a love,
The God in us lifting us beyond hate.

Empty

Emptiness in me, lost in my head,
All love gone, dying, inside dead.
Loneliness, isolated, gone are you,
Left am I, thrill of life, nothingness.
Purpose, meaning, revive, alive,
Bring life back to me,
Accept me, love and know me,
I have so much to give.
Wanting to be dead no more.

Poetry by Howard Lousada

Sydney – Bleak Winter

You don't realize what it is to be fed,
Until you've experienced true hunger.
And you might not appreciate a warm bed,
Unless you've been homeless in winter -
Where the wind hounds the flesh you can't cover.
A warm spot! But 'Security' sees, then shuffled along,
3 am, trudging the streets just to stop the shiver.
Some of the trains are warm, but not too close – I pong.
But the worst thing about life on the streets – it's monotonous,
Tedium shatter occasionally – Police harass.
I watched the purposed crowds rush past,
Hurrying to jobs too many find odious.
But now as a bird in it's nest – and never again flight,
Ad my food – I'll roll my eyeballs with delight.

Poetry by Madeleine Kelly

Big news?

Bipolar could come
from neurological harm
from infant abuse.

Teacher gives credence
to the phrase 'f*cked in the head.'
Causal link approaches.

This is nothing new:
I acknowledged what is true.
You are old, untrue.

Poetry by Natalie Spring

Threads

Bind and twist
Through my soul
My mind my heart.
Threads slither, slide
Their way up my spine
Cutting me apart.

Black ash threads
Knotting me.
Pulling me each way.
Threads stitching me up.
So I have no say.

What I feel.
Or who I am.
And where I want to be.
These sledder razor edged,
Threads of society to conformity.

Threads bind and twist.
Through me,
Almost so no one can see.
Like a spiders spindle silk
And wed.
Catching.
Devouring me.

Poetry by Shawntaye Scott

Depressional Demons

The demons in life counteract the good,
My faith in the Supreme Being is tested
When I experience my suicidal thoughts.
That continuously invade my privacy.

The battle is in my head, I feel trapped,
with a sinking feeling of inner decay
as my body slowly withers away into
a piece of useless and worthless trash.

I'm drowning in a tub of bitterness,
And the pain and loneliness is biting,
My blood is full of toxic otc meds
To whisk away my body and mind.

My mental illness remains my solace,
As I'm struggling to climb out of it
And rescue myself into a safer haven
Where I can be at peace inside myself.

Poetry by DH

Memory Boulevard

It's no one's fault
if humans remain empty of compassion.
Boulevards of cool advice fill our life.
No avenues of unconditional love.
"Put them into a nursing home"
every one said when
I became too ill to provide care.
It was easier than
offer a helping hand .

My memory boulevard is
void of street lights,
I fear to walk it at any time.

All I feel today, is pain and sadness
for all, including my mother,
who cannot live and die at home.
And guilt, for not doing more.
I live in the boulevard of knowledge
that, one day, I will be one of them.
I am all churned up with fear
for all the people of the world
who have nothing to give.
Too busy to live lives of their own.

For this lonely, worried old woman,
this frail old man, someone's mother,
Some one's father
Wandering in the corridors
need to be taken out of the nursing home
into the sunshine, into the gardens, into the
boulevards of happy memories
when they were well and young
a wife, a lover,
let us have an ice cream at McDonalds.

Our helpless parents are well looked after,
Nicely dressed, well fed. We have no time
to see the rivulets of loneliness
that are wrinkles on their hands.

Poetry by Carmen

ON THE EDGE OF REALITY

My brain is my enemy
Filling with cobwebs
The impossibility of
Trying to differentiate
Between reality and unreality
Pure unadulterated evil and hate
Seeping through the fibers of my body
I feel numb and I'm vibrating
The spirits are inside me now
They want me to kill myself
I feel detached
I'm losing myself
My personality has been
Swept away on a cool
Breeze like a dead leaf
I am the living dead

BLOODY HELL

My heart bleeds like a dying rose
Red and bloody contending with my woes
All my thoughts are abstract and don't make
sense
The voices are combined, noisy and dense
Occasionally a light shines through and
Lifts my spirits a bit
But all I can do is quietly sit
I know I have to fight the demons
All manifesting inside
But all I can do is try to hide
They're insidious, indefatigable and evil
They run me down its unbelievable
But I must fight with all my might
With this all consuming disease
I must try to live again like a newly
Formed rose swaying in the breeze

Poetry by Jasmine Powell

I flirted with the herbal smoke
It singed the paper and the lips
For years I had not let it in
I smouldered brightly in the din

And now, it appeared before me
A halo in the bush
I wrapped my throat around it
And the gods burned in the distance

A sacrifice of meat and wool is custom
Take toubab as an offering
The head is shaved
It knows not the god 'cept the fear of it

Black man, black man
In the kingdom of my minds journey
You know I know I believe
Black man, black man
You know I know I believe
But I cannot dance amongst the flames
For I have slept in the hospital bed

Poetry by Raija

It's Easier than Dealing with the Pain

Mental illness runs deep within my veins,
Get out I shout, get out of my body and let me have the peace that I have waited for so long.

But to no avail, it hinders and haunts me every day making my world one of debilitation and chaos.

There is nowhere to hide from it, it's internal and you can't get away from it.

A razor blade is all my mind can think of; bleed so it can leave your body.

The unthinkable happens, what a relief although left lying in a pool of your own blood, your life source. You now have a new focus, how will I be able to hide this from my family, especially my children.

Anxiety kicks in and you begin to realise what has gone on, task one clean up this bloody mess, task two put on a long sleeve jumper to hide the evidence.

Deep seated depression, why do I continue to follow the same path?? Why me?? How did I become this way??

These are all questions that no-one has the answer to. I feel like I am at the bottom of a black hole, as I try to climb out I lose grip and fall back in again, the sounds of my fingernails grating on the slippery mossy walls.

Where can I search for some-one to help me, when no-one can see what is truly happening to me. I can use metaphors to try to describe my pain, but the hurt never leaves me.

Poetry by Rod Boyce

DAD-YOUR LOVE CHANGED EVERYTHING

My life was in a mess
And I didn't know what to do
I was unhealthy, unhappy and weak
But dad, you had a few clues

We'll just take it slowly son
Love will find a way
I have faith in you
And life will turn out great

I was constantly sick
There were many years of pain
Have confidence, dad said
Love will find a way

Dad gave all the resources he had
And an enormous amount of support
Love started to find a way
And my battles were fought

This year my life turned around
Love had found a way
With a nice girl, nice job, nice friends
Life was really great

During this terrible event
When you tragically died
Love did find a way?
As I cried, and cried and cried

You left me a book in the cupboard
Called "Dad's Book of Wisdom"
Your love will find a way
So that I can look after mum

You taught me one thing
Love changes everything
I am now happy, healthy and strong
Your love changed everything

Poetry by Rod Boyce

LOST

I didn't know what to do
I woke up this morning and I was lost
Lost in a lost world
Now I am lost, next to a tree

LOST

I didn't know what work I wanted
I looked for jobs this morning but was lost
Lost in a world of unemployment
Now I am lost, sitting next to a branch

LOST

I didn't know where to live
I woke up at my parents' house this morning
Lost at looking for a rental property
Now I am lost, looking at the tree

LOST

I didn't have any friends
I was lost this morning with no friends to ring
No friends to care for, or share things with
This tree is my friend, so I will hug the tree

LOST

I didn't fit into my family
I was not into hockey like them
No family to care for, I was really lost
This tree gives me strength, it's my family

LOST

I had been walking for hours
Where the hell was I
But who really cared for me, I was lost
It's just the tree and me, we are one

FOUND

Hey there's the track, I've found my way home
And I've found a friend and family
I've found a place to hang out
I am a poet with a tree – it's called poet-tree

Poetry by Raymond Westwood

Every Moment

We must treasure every moment for they are but fleeting things, since we don't know just what tomorrow brings.

Yes we must live our lives for now knowing not what lies ahead, but to know we should simply be glad.

We must cherish every moment knowing just how quick they pass, for we don't know just what the future holds.

Yes we must live for the present knowing time can go fast, but be thankful for the life that unfolds.

Field of Flowers

In fields of flowers I'd sit there for hours, watching the time just fly.

Yes I love the fields of flowers, just resting my mind and feeling as high as a kite.

In fields of flowers I'd lie there for hours, watching the world go by.

Yes I love the fields of flowers, just sketching my body, feeling like I'm on a cloud.

Simple Joys

The simple joys of life are often the best, like a breath of fresh air to feel refreshed.

Yes the simple joys of life are simple pleasure, taken by the measure.

The simple joys of life are often embraced, like eating and drinking just for taste.

Yes the simple joys of life are relaxation, freedom from tribulation.

Poetry by Ralph Nelson

Imperfectly Sane Blues

I woke up this morning with that same old pain,
An aching in my head, feeling not quite sane,
My hoochie coochie woman done left me again,
Took my little red rooster and caught the midnight train,
Ain't got no money and no whiskey,
Centrelink and AFP always messin' with me.

Stains on me clothes, holes in me shoes,
Got Johnny economy on the mornin' news,
I just can't shake those,
Imperfectly sane blues.

Had no love when I was a kid,
Teenage years on the skids,
Tried to play that Public Service game,
But then that black dog came,
And started barking in my brain,
You're no good, imperfectly sane.

Took too many drugs and too much booze,
Buts that no excuse,
For those,
Imperfectly sane blues.

Gotta see a case manager,
Gotta see a shrink,
Dey awful worried about whats I think,
Gots no educating, gots no skills,
F%?ked up body, head full of pills,
They say they can fix my faulty mind,
By building a new hospital ward and locking me inside.

I say I just need to talk to you,
About childhood problems and abuse,
Then I may be able to lose,
Those goddam imperfectly sane blues.

Poetry by Ralph Nelson

Just Take Them!

I can't sleep at night,
I'm tired all day,
I'm feeling all depressed,
Got to go see a shrink,
He'll know what's best.

Just take some little white pills, boy,
Just take some little white pills,
You'll get better any day now,
If you just take some little white pills.

Don't worry son,
They have a few minor side effects,
Like vision problems, churning guts,
And you'll have to forget,
About alcohol and sex.

Just take your little white pills, boy,
Just take your little white pills,
You'll get better in a week or two,
If you just take your little white pills.

Don't worry about the "brain zaps",
They'll go away quite soon,
And your constipated bowels,
Can be fixed,
By eating prunes.

Just take your little white pills, boy,
Just take your little white pills,
You'll get better in a month or so,
Just take your little white pills.

You may get some strange thoughts,
Like suicide,
Or the urge to kill,
But you'll get better,
When you take those little pills

Just take your little white pills, boy
Just take your little white pills,
You'll get better in a year or two,
Just keep taking those little white pills.

Poetry by Ralph Nelson

Butterflies, Parrots & Rainbows.

I used to have no colour in my life,
My thoughts were black & grey and hues of darkest blue,
My curtains were always closed, no sunlight was allowed,
Doom and gloom pervaded,
Surrounded by the darkest cloud.
Always worried about my health and wealth,
And about my every sin.

But now I'm collecting butterflies, parrots and rainbows,
And letting the sunshine in,
Butterflies, parrots and rainbows,
And letting the sunshine in.

Depression, oppression and bad news,
Down and out, drunk, stoned and blue.
Didn't want to go to bed or then get out again,
Couldn't sleep or eat, going round the bend,
But then the light came into my life,
Clouds dispersed, colour came on the wind.

And now I'm collecting butterflies, parrots and rainbows,
And I'm letting the sunshine in,
Butterflies, parrots and rainbows,
And letting the sunshine in.

Poetry by James Kelso

Momentary Happiness

Sometimes when I'm sitting
Alone in my house
By the window
Sunlight streaming in
And gentle music
Crooning in the background
I experience
Momentary happiness
An ephemeral state of bliss
Like grasping
A dandelion in the air
You can see it
Floating by
But catching it
Is harder
But if you do
You have done well
Because when you do
You have grasped
Happiness

It fills the air
In the rare moments
When it's there
The stillness is quiet
To let it speak
It's gone, now
Of course
But it was there
Before
When I wrote this poem
When the music was different
And the atmosphere
Held control
Moments like that
Make life worth living
When the stillness
Is not oppressive
Or boring
Or stultifying
But pleasant
And peaceful
And it holds a grip of the air
And fills it with content

Poetry by James Kelso

The Wilderness

Meandering a path
Through
The Wilderness
Snakes underfoot
Vultures above
And bears in the forest
I look inside myself
And find
Hidden treasures
I never knew I had
Constantly
Seeking
Searching
Finding out more
Trampling through the wilderness
Of my mind

Vanessa No More

Vanessa used to be here
In this house
In this room
In my life
But now
She's gone
Died
Lost
Dead
I can't believe it
But it's true
She's no more
And life
Will never be the same

She was always happy
Always caring
Always sweet
Always a trial
But she was so innocent
Most of the time
That she didn't mean it

Maybe
I'm sugar-coating her life
But now that it's gone

Poetry by James Kelso

I think she deserves that
To be treated
With respect
And care
And reverence

Yes, she was difficult
Very difficult
But I loved her
And she meant no harm
Her mistakes
I forgave
Endlessly
And she did them again
And again
And again

Gandhi was right
You don't really know someone
Until you live with them
And despite
The money dramas
The cigarettes
The phone bill
The videos
The cordial
On the carpet
And her lack of skills
 In every department
 I loved her
 For who she was
 For what she meant to me
 The friendship
 The relationship
 The happy times
 And the fun times
 We spent together

Her boredom
And agitation
Drove me mad
And then there were
The times when she was silly
Or stupid
But all the same
I loved her
Like a parent loves his child
And like a husband loves his wife

Poetry by James Kelso

Did she return my love
Yes, sometimes
When I least expected it
And when
I wasn't barking it
Down her throat
She did love me
In a shy
Understated
Kind of way
She did
Yes, she did

I love you Vanessa
As you loved me
And I will always miss you
Now that you are free

The Media Ideal

It seems as though
At this shopping mall
Today
Apart from the purpose
Of shopping
And spending money

The purpose of life is
To attain
The affluent, media ideal

Not just to attain it
But live it
And in doing this
Consume the fashionable, signified
Name brands
The exclusive
The elite

And enjoy the kind of life
The media
Suggests to us

Really, there's no alternative
To the media's idea
Of an affluent, relaxed

Poetry by James Kelso

Enjoyable lifestyle
The lifestyle portrayed
From all the shops

High fashion,
Ersatz 'culture'
Razor-sharp looks
And the outdoor
Friends and BBQ
Lifestyle
Home renovations
Trendy colour-schemes
Low-cut jeans
And designer labels

Huge TVs
3D sound systems
Kitchen wizardry
Aplenty
And home design
To put the 3 bedroom house
On the ¼ acre block
To shame

We're all striving for it
But few are chosen
What is the actual life like
Of those that are near it

What is the lifestyle
Of those that "are" it
And furthermore
How does one get
From cradle to grave
And attain "it"?

I get some vision of it
By visiting Chadstone
And seeing receptive consumers
Buy their way into happiness

The question is
If you're not winning
On this crazy merry-go-round

Where is happiness
Without it ??

Poetry by Melinda Smith

Given

Poolside baby showers
herald the summer pregnancies.
Sweat caresses swollen knees;
mothers tally labour hours;
giftwrap is everywhere.
Christmas is in the air.

But by the time you come
first frost has been and gone.
A long walk brings you on.
I howl ten hours, a dumb
animal shocked at pain's demands.
You are given into my hands:

all downy with the smell
of love, my warm wise frog.
Then: eight months of the black dog.
I crawl back from cold hell
that no one understands
out of quietest, loneliest lands.

Now you seem newly-made
or is it me, new-born?
Chill fog melts in the dawn
and now I am afraid
of how much I can care.
My trembling is all my prayer.

Falling

A brown and slimy autumn leaf
was mashed onto the floor. I said
'Who didn't wipe their feet?', and spread
the shopping bags around it. Grief

was hiding in the food again
- the pumpkin, the bananas too -
brought me to tears. That's nothing new:
last week it was the multi-grain.

Poetry by Melinda Smith

My mind begins once more to thresh
its blighted no-hope harvest. May
this season end. I need to say
when planting can begin afresh.

Song of the anti-depressant

I've been slaving and behaving; I've been scrimping, I've been saving
but I never get a moment to enjoy the peace I'm craving
and the tunnel that I'm crawling through gets longer by the day
so I'm thinking—bar the drinking—there must be a better way.

Is it better? Is it better to become a good forgetter?
Is it peaceful? Is it calm? Will it fix me like a charm?
Well, I never! Well, I never—what a dandy little pill!
What a soother, what a wonder! What? Another? Yes, I will.

Why, there's really nothing to this! Problem solved! Although ... although ...
I do feel a little sheepish I'm the very last to know.
All you ladies should have mentioned what was propping up your grins;
what was keeping you from killing sprees and other deadly sins.

When I think that half the mums I know are gobbling these down
and the other half are paddling gamely but about to drown
it's surprising and amazing and a little bit bizarre
that the little pills that saved me are as secret as they are.

Poetry by John Wakefield

ONCE

It once was so easy
so bright and so breezy
I did what I ought
without conscious thought.
Now, The simplest of things
a great effort brings.
Things easily won
now bring me undone.

If you go slow enough
you will get through the rough.
If you give it a try
you are bound to get by.
So I keep on trying till I get it right.
DAMN - Where have the hidden the Kryptonite?

Poetry by Gail Fearnhead

A shadow of one's self

I lived in the darkness of my own shadow,
Unseen, unheard, unloved.
Afraid to walk into the light
For fear of what I might see.
I float as the living dead,
For if I was to awaken from the dead,
What would I find.
I live in my own hell on earth,
For fear of loving,
For loving means exposing ones self,
And opening the gates to pain and regret.
I run from the shame of my own demise,
But all I find is nothingness.
A forever search for peace.
There are angles all around me,
Shining their light to God,
But I was afraid to walk until the day,
God lifted me up in his arms,
And carried me out of the pits of hell,
Into his glory and forever lasting warmth.
Now I no longer fear death, pain or regret,
I only fear is God himself.

Poetry by Pia Prescott

Ambivalent

We are ambivalent,
Ghosts, ghosts -
Mere, yet defined.
Echoes - resounding silently,
Without whisper, nor refrain.
Imprints searing through our minds,
Throughout foreign mirrors and inverted glass.
And, reluctantly beating hearts.
Devoid of existence,
Devoid of dreams -
Bleeding, burning,
Ash.

Insanity's embrace

Above the city,
silence screams.
One million thoughts,
One million dreams.
I ponder through my medicated haze,
How the paths of lives below me transpire, in a similar haze?
Fate? Am I a liar?
Robotic, autonomous - puppets of some unknown fate.
In which the strings of heart,
are converse to those of mind.
Heart? Heart.
Mind? Mind.
Don't you mind.
Think of their journeys overmuch, and fear.
Fear, my reader -
For then, like me, you will rise above them.
Rise above them into subjective observation.
Insanity's embrace - a bittersweet taste,
which I have come to learn, fades not with any haste.
Of the world and it's sufferings,
I am not chaste.

Poetry by Pia Prescott

Begged

Do you know?
Have you seen?
The void unfurling, before which I scream.
You've glimpsed it through me, behind me.
You've stitched me together, and begged while I bleed.
Begged that the void, was not so alluring as it seemed.
Yet now, I soar!
Despite your uproar.
Your stitches came lose,
and now I seem sore.
Your stitches came lose,
so here I refuse -
I'm yours to abuse.

Death's bittersweet taste

As the days grow colder -
And I grow older,
I no longer desire,
What this earth has to admire.
I died a long time ago,
But, something went wrong.
My bones carried on.
My heartbeat stayed strong.
But now, I am tired.
Of all I admired.
I dream of the final lights,
That my cold heart seeks by night.
I long for the cold embrace,
Death's bittersweet taste.
My neck on the edges,
Of iron cold ledges.
Music in my ears,
And, peace in my heart.
Back to where I began,
Back to the start.

Poetry by Ralph Nelson

We Are The Lonely

Chainsaws of conversation intrude into our consciousness,
No one to listen to or care about our brilliant thoughts,
Destined by genetic misfortune to be outsiders of society,
Always living with loneliness,
Trying not to follow genetic compulsion,
“You are weird”
Strangers in our own heads,
“You can’t trust the quiet ones!”
Shy, insecure, no self-esteem or confidence,
“Why don’t you speak up?”
“Cat got your tongue?”
“The squeaky wheel gets the grease”
Does the silent one have a gradual breakdown?
And get replaced by a shiny new one?
It can be the same with children,
“This one’s no good, let’s have another,”
The lonely Autism spectrum gloom surrounds us as children,
And we are shunned by the “normals”,
Then we grow to be,
Depressed adults,
With a multitude of diagnoses,
Perhaps it’s Asperger’s Syndrome?

Poetry by Ralph Nelson

Dat Loco Man

Dat Loco man ain't like you and me,
He just sits on the beach and stares out at the sea,
He got no house, no need for a car,
All he owns is a tent and a three string guitar,
He just sits there day after day,
Dreaming of a life in a land far away.

Loco man, Loco man,
The kids all scream,
You smell like shit,
You live in a dream.

He just sits alone on the sand,
Speaking a language I can't understand,
He's got no friends and no family,
That's all in his past, just sweet memories,
I used to bring him fish for a feed,
Then we'd drink some wine and smoke some weed.

As a reward he'd play me a tune,
We'd sit on the beach and stare up at the moon,
He'd play me a tune on his three string guitar,
And I'd make a wish on his lucky star.

One night I went to the beach to take him some food,
But things weren't quite right, a sombre mood,
I looked in his tent but he wasn't there,
No sign of his beautiful eyes or dreadlocked hair,
He'd died in his sleep, they threw his body into the sea,
That extra paperwork was something they didn't need.

As I looked through my tearful eyes at the moon,
On the easterly breeze came a haunting tune,
A wonderful tune played on a three string guitar,
And I made a wish on his lucky star.....

Poetry by Ralph Nelson

Eyes Of A Stranger

Easter Sunday,
Folk Festival in zero seven,
An experience that seemed,
To put me close to Heaven.

Tired, resting my eyes,
A sudden warmth filled my mind,
When I looked up,
You were smiling at me,
A mystical indigenous Canadian,
With an expression mighty kind.

You told a story of a drum that talked to you,
And the audience just accepted that it was true,
Then you asked for disciples to come on stage,
"A thing that I could never do",
But there I was with eleven other men,
And a woman who learnt to sing,
In a dialect she never knew.

You thanked us all and made the audience applaud,
Then asked all the men to shake you hand,
How could you know how I felt inside?
But when my hand touched yours, we both cried.

A single tear stayed on your cheek,
You didn't wipe it away,
It stayed there for your whole set,
Then you asked us all to pray,
After all it was Gods special Sunday.

I had a weird feeling that afternoon,
That we would meet again,
Stepped onto the road and there you were,
And you greeted me as if I were your best friend,
You acknowledged you knew how I felt inside,
"A troubled soul" you said, "something you cannot hide".

You held me tight and said a prayer in your native tongue,
And offered me an album of other songs that you had sung,
Suddenly I felt that I was out of all danger,
A feeling that somehow I'd received redemption,
From looking into the eyes,
Of a total stranger.

Poetry by Tina Rachelle Smithee

Pole to Pole

My moods, shifting like the Earth
Spin the globe, where will it land
North Pole, South Pole
Troubled East, exotic west
Nomad mind, never stays in one place
Mania is here, hair stands on end
I shall save the world, I am electrified
Projects started, never to be finished
Hyper all day, happiness is abundant
Dangerous mind, consequences nill
Colors are bright, stinging my eyes
Emerald greens, turquoise blues
All around is beauty, I want to consume it
Smile is wide, conversation so quick
I am invincible, sins will be forgiven
Oh the crash, my fragile psyche fissures
Black horizon, moon is hidden
Bed is my home, sleep is my existence
Isolation is best, energy is spent
No communication, talk is cheap
Thoughts, self-soothings of the darkest kind
Oh, to be selfish, I can obtain perfect peace
Broken mind comforted, I have a way out
Sooo, sooo tired, never want to wake
My dank inner musings, deep in my conscience
Doctor of mind disorders, chance for reprieve
He is passive, no judgement allowed
New prescription, take every day
Pills always in my mouth, bitterness on my tongue
Compliance is a must, do not deviate
Moods swing, constant travel
Meds slow the journey, just for a while
North pole, south pole
Troubled east, exotic west
Where will I start?, when will it end?

Bipolar 1 with rapid cycles
Anxiety disorder
Major depressive disorder
Lamactil 200mg, vibryyd 40mg, ativan 1mg 3xday

Poetry by Kwinaus

A Choice From Duo

Up and down, uncertainty, just what tomorrow holds,
The shutters down, the day ends, all thought and deeds to fold.
I know not how, I know not why, it all comes back to 'me',
A speedy drive, a drink or three, an eBay spending spree.

My life I'm two, a future told, a life of wanton pain,
I need help, I know that now, the pattern cannot remain.
I want the bright, the life to shine, my lot to be so real,
Each step I take my brain does bet the rest of me will steal.

The shutters raise the day pours in, just what does it all hold?
The ones I love all tell me what, I know I can't be told.
Don't judge me now for what I've done, or what I've failed to be,
I've tried in vain to tell the world I just need to be free.

I'm trapped inside a world of hurt, a world of ups and downs,
I want to run, to hide from all, no words, no tears, no sounds.
To a quiet world, a world of peace, of one and not my two,
A single choice, an end to all, I know not what to do.

Its guilty felt, so flippant been, my life could end so short,
My love remains, my family first, a dominant cohort.
The black it stalks, my flame to steal, it's primary goal,
My love is real, my psyche frail, uncertainty rules my role.

I'll lose it all, taken away, the world is full of dark,
The light is lost, gone far away, a world so bleak and stark.
No one can know just what is told, my brain just speaks so loud,
A hero none, my time is done, my deeds that of a coward.

My choice awaits, my choice alone,
No one to calm, no one I'll phone.
When choice is made, the game will end,
Complete and final, as future intend.

Poetry by Kwinaus

No Choice

A verdict made, a verdict bold,
Some say young, others old,
At one by night, but two by day,
My body there, it's truth to pay.

The peace and calm doth taunt me dear,
A pull to do what all should fear,
The knowledge clear the means appear,
The whitened day is drawing near.

No-one controls by force or power,
This mind of mine will soon devour,
The all that's me, the side that's weak,
Not strong, not bold, not mild or meek.

A time of joy, a time of pain,
A time of peace and calm regain,
A full regret my family told
No kiss or bye, no one to hold.

Poetry by Kwinaus

The Web Cycle

“Oh what a tangled web we weave, when first we practice to deceive”,
A saying I live by with my life entrenched, in deceit untruths and no self-relieve.

It's dense cloud stalks my bright shining day, it sits and waits for my time to pay,
The web I weave has no escape, no love, no joy, it's selfish, self-hate.

I weave it well, I weave it true, it's threads are thin, strong and ever new,
It is there for no-one as no-one else can see, the beads of the self lies, the webs there just
for me.

It shadows my day time, and limits my nights, with thoughts of the outcome and on-going
fight,
To maintain self illusion, of stable and calm, when truly it's bedlam, my self loathing farm.

I'd like to just curtsey and to silently leave stage left, from the web be in hiding, my weaving
bereft,
But it knows no bounds, to the ends of the earth, the strings of my making, will follow with
mirth.

So cue bulk confusion, just what do I do? No direction, no let up, no judgement in lieu,
Just a world of my making, a world fake and contrived, one filling with ill-feeling, one where
I've self knived,

A self destructive web weave, one set to destroy, the foundation of family I have tried to
enjoy,
It's insidious tendrils weave tight in my mind, to the end point it warms me, to the dangers
makes blind.

It throws off inhibition; it makes games of the deal, the people all players, not here, all
unreal,
The gains it so promises, the results it extolls, a check out, a down time, to beat the webs
hold.

Reality claims darkness, the result comes the same, the web weaving deceit, the
dangerous game,
It revolves in a circuit, my doing my part, by the lies, deceit and self insult, its journey
restarts.

Poetry by Kwinaus

Decisions

How to, what for, why, who knows,
The balance gentle, the game unshown,
A fine degree to fall each side,
To catch or fall, to be denied.

To tell a tale, it must be there,
None true for one but two take care,
The things just glimpsed, my minds amuck,
A world unseen, is now unstuck.

I question sight, I question mind,
It's much to take, It's all to find,
My minds wild streams of thoughts fly by,
My mood reflects my minds wild eye.

I don't know how, I don't know why,
These thoughts of mine will not subside,
They're needed not, destructive vein,
Too much to have, yet they remain.

My journey full but not complete,
My dreams awash with fiendish feats,
The light has shot its beam so far,
It's now a choice not bad to mar.

The people shunned I shut them down,
Defeat myself, my choice unsound,
The urge to plan the urge to do,
Defeats clear thought, my stoic slewn.

The path is clear, but terror reigns,
Unlike the past, this cloud invades,
In ways and forms I know not how,
It rocks my soul, to heed and bow.

A culture pure a culture fair,
To heed defeat but not despair,
A poignant start or stoic end,
My life lies bare, a soul to mend.

Poetry by Kwinaus

Recovery?

The journey's fraught with danger, pitfalls, potholes, knives and pills,
While I watch my children playing with their laughter thrills and spills.
They inspire me to try hard, to ignore dark in favour of the light,
Which is fine during the daytime, but works little during the night.

The images plague my waking, they invade my sleep time dreams,
Where nights were times of freedom, they are now darkness gleamed,
There's no escape, no avoidance, no denial, no ignoring the increasing hold,
The images gain momentum, an all-encompassing fold.

The more ignored, the more it builds, ever present, ever destructive,
It's power from within, it's desire from within, its action ever active,
Concerned or not, it will deceive, it's goal full well to survive and achieve,
Then wane from sight for victim to mend, before weaving anew making once again believe.

Not knowing the thin line, has it been crossed or not?
Can I control the emotion, can I really call "stop"?
Am I fooling myself silly, is it all make believe?
Can I really say "no more" just get up and leave?

I know so few answers, but this I do know,
Where ever I travel, the images will go,
The game is not over, the thoughts are still real,
The danger is genuine, and my life's the real deal.

Pills procured and now hidden, the blades I have bought,
Play straight to the images, straight into my thoughts,
My past experience no benefit when the danger is clear,
It refines all the pictures, so no one will hear.

The thoughts flow like water, but intention is clear,
It's like fire and ice, and my minds eye doth tear,
The pull gains momentum, "Just do it" I hear,
I can't put family through torture, they're who I hold dear.

Distraction is useless, it dulls not a jot,
Like brushing a bushfire with books about "Spot",
Resistance is useless, it ends all the same,
A trip to the ER, endless repeating my name.

So maybe just "do it", this time it's diverse,
Refined to the nines, hopes results will reverse,
To break the true cycle and end with a win,
Not damned to be ghostly for committing a sin.

Poetry By Wendy Andrews

Diaspora

We are refugees from the police action of the soul.
We have scattered
Some to the mountains of Keep Busy, Don't Stop.
Others lie low in fog and swamp.
The uncomfortable feeling in the pit of my stomach
Is me.
It's where I fled.
I crouch here and pull the strings
That make the shell lurch on.
It's difficult to decipher its needs.
I've made a few tracks for it...
from bed to kitchen to tv to email.
The mind imagines marvels
But how to make the shell-shocked shell comply?
We bunker down in these detention centres
while the home wars rage on.
We yearn for our Dreaming
But those who go back to the Mother Country are surprised.
We still yearn.
Because it's not a place,
It's our soul we have deserted.
We left it bleeding, shivering,
silently screaming.
How do we return?
Our neighbours don't know we've gone.
Sometimes we don't know we've gone.
I've kept one trinket close,
a silver thread of hope.
Some could grab nothing
and didn't make it.
I propose a new nation
The Land of Survivors.
We displace no one,
no Middle East Mess.
All we need do, apparently,
is take one tiny step
from left brain to right.
From lonely ego settlement
to connected conscious community.
SoulHome.
I've found a map.
I'm setting out right now.
Wish me luck.
And as things collapse in the 'real world'
People would do well to look to us...
We know how to survive tough times.

Poetry By Emma Mauro

Medication

Medication
Mind is still
Gives birth to greater things
Let yourself leave your physical limitations
Pass yourself over to what
Heaven can create for you
Let the universe unfold
Caress you and
Enclose you in it's wings, and
Take you where it is
That you need to go
Transcend this physical life
Let you plan from in the
Stars, Jupiter and Mars
Let an eternal sun
Shine enlightenment upon you
Let its ethereal glow
Pass through your being
And guide you to your
Gentle awakening on Earth

A Life in the Shadows

Life is a dark place
Filled with wondrous light
The tempest with a second face
Waiting to lure and delight
All of your senses
All of your fears

She stands in the shadows
She lurks in dark corners
The destroyer of good fellows
Turning spa into sauna
Without rhyme
Without reason

A cold hearted mistress
A cruel, distant soul
She thrives on distress
As she whittles her hole
Leave me be
Leave eternally

Poetry By Emma Mauro

Run

Come fly with me
I will take you away
Leave the reality for fantasy
Dare to dream a better day

A chance to run
To be wild and free
Dance under the sun
Nothing comes between you and liberty

Scream into the sky
Cavort recklessly through the street
If questioned, answer why
Because of a chance to meet

Do not be afraid
Ecstasy beckons to us all
For only the stayed
Won't heal to its call

Feel your wings outstretched
Marvel over the greatest view
No price can fetch
The wonders created for you

It need not end
This revelry in the sun
Don't forget to send
Others, it's only just begun

Flying

Get a shiver down your spine
And look out into the dark
To where your future lies waiting
Waiting for you to find the spark
The spark of courage from you
To take a step alone
Stepping carefully at first
And when you are grown
To running as fast as you can
With hands outstretched
Reaching for your prize
The one that you thought you were to wretched
To get on your own
Run! Run! Run!
The Earth may disappear from beneath you
But flying is much more fun!

Poetry By Emma Mauro

Black Cat

It's a black cat
It stands upon my chest
It claws into my breast

It's a black cat
He arches his back with grace
And lies across my face

It's a black cat
That tries to smother me
Why won't he let me be

It's a black cat
He starts to hiss and spit
He knows I'm a misfit

It's a black cat
He purrs triumphantly
And it's a mystery

It's a black cat
How the hell did he get in?
When I'm locked in this prison

It's a black cat
He rubs me with his head
His heart is made of lead

It's a black cat
I wish that he would leave
But not until I learn to disbelieve

I'M A BLACK CAT

Poetry By Emma Mauro

Plea

I feel that I have lost control
I think I may have lost my mind
And maybe I am no longer me?
But if I'm not me, who can I be now?
I am wondering blind
Chasing my tail around and around
Running madly in a circle
Spiralling wildly into the abyss
Spinning, arms outstretched, faster and faster
Screaming at the top of my lungs
"Can anybody see me?
Does anybody even care?
Save me!" I yell
But no one hears my plea
They are deaf to my cries
They turn their faces away from me
Like I was never here at all
And if they do see me
It is only to kick me while I'm down
All I want is a little love
I have so much to give, so much to share
But nobody wants what I have to offer
I stare blindly at the world
Unable to see it through my tears of pain
Unwilling to move in case I trip
And land upon my face
My body aches out of frustration
My heart wrenched with loneliness
My mind puzzled with confusion
And my soul shrivels from neglect
Oh my God, somebody has to help me
Before I am spreadeagled on the floor

Poetry By Emma Mauro

The Goaler

My mind is a prison of my own creation
My life, my thoughts, are its own foundation
The walls rise up a thousand feet tall
And me, in the centre, left feeble and small

Light cannot permeate this prison I've built
Darkness surrounds me and cloaks me with guilt
I know not what I have done to end up in here
And now people are asking, they prod, peek and peer

The walls of my fortress are thick and strong
Freedom from my prison will be arduous and long
My hopes are resting with these strangers I've let
Into my prison, digging up thoughts I've tried to forget

My gaoler is cruel, for I alone am she
She is tough and unyielding on little old me
I beg her forgiveness, I know not what for
And pray for the day she unlocks the door

So for now, I'll be content, one brick at a time
To dismantle the walls I've worked hard to combine
Bricks of self-hatred, loathing and fear
Each one dissolving with every shed tear

It hurts to bring down the walls that I've made
It has been peaceful here, deep in their shade
Once I am free of it, where will I go?
A scary world waits me that I do not know.

What will I do once I've torn down my goal?
Will I be bathed in salvation or batter with hail?
Does my soul, now free of the chains that kept it in
Know where to start, where to begin?

Poetry By Emma Mauro

Deep Deep Down

Deep deep down
Black black night
Under the ground
Without light
Darkness reigns
No way out
Dull throbbing pains
Need to shout
How can I
Release this stress
Want to die
It does press
Chest is tight
Heart feels weak
Head feels light
Can hardly speak
So harassed
Left to drown
Soul's trespassed
Deep deep down

Behind Smiling Eyes

Behind this smile lies a broken heart
And eyes with no more tears to cry
I am tired of walking this earth alone
With nothing more than a dismissive sigh
Here I am, kindred soul – please, look at me
Please give me what others deny
All that I truly did want to have
Love, passion, affection and company

Poetry By Emma Mauro

Dove

Oh my serenity! Where have you gone?
I misplaced you somewhere – what have I done?
I searched in the clouds, you weren't to be found
I looked in the earth – deep in the ground

I ran a thousand miles and still you weren't there
I swam through the oceans but still you were spare
I walked along the intricacy of the greatest labyrinth
And I climbed the highest mountains to their zenith

I have searched in the abyss and the darkest chasm
I made love with my beloved into its final spasm
I have consorted with angels and sort out their truth
But of serenity's presence, I have had no proof

I will keep searching for the innocence I lost
Though the benefits of my journey far outways the cost
I still wonder if it's the price I am willing to pay
For the chance to witness the dawn of a brighter day

Freedom

Tortured soul
Broken heart
Saddened eyes
No new start

Out of patience
Fuses burnt out
Drowning in madness
I want to shout

Let me be free
Save me please
Don't let me drown
Let me be at ease

Take my torture
My tears of pain
Mend my broken heart
Wash me in healing rain

Clouds of sadness disappear
Oh, disappear
Clarity of mind
So precious, so dear

Poetry By Emma Mauro

Brain

The magic spark
The missing link
Have all been kept under lock and key
The shining light
The guiding star
And, oh God, it's me! It's me!

I fumbled around in the dark
Until I found the missing part
A pen, some paper, the flow of words
Have once again found their home
I think, I scribble, I flick my pen
I shake my foot, there's music there
Insomnia has claimed me once again
"Hello there, my old friend."

Does the creative flow cause it?
Or is it here because it cures it?
Words and music fill my head
And I know that I'll have no rest
My brain is tired and my eyes long to sleep
But my body and the pen still resist
My head, it aches – my stomach churns
But still pours forth this nonsensical verse
Sleep! Sleep! Sleep!
I want my brain to stop
But on it winds and races
Is it afraid that if it does cease
It will no longer exist, no longer thinks
Make it stop whirring away inside my head
So my poor old self can have some rest!

Poetry By Emma Mauro

Insomnia

My mind is racing
And my heart is chasing
It's 2am and I'm wide awake
And I know I'm going to break

So just be there to hold my hand
And please catch me when I fall
If I need to, help me stand
Demons catch up with us all

I cannot sleep
I cannot breathe deep
I lie on my bed, it's late at night
I wish for sweet dreams with all my might

But peace keeps on escaping me
And dreams keep eluding me
The radio plays but it's a blur
I close my eyes but my mind is astir

My head is ticking
And my heart is tricking
Why am I plagued with restless nights
What can I do to put it right

Diagnosis

I wish I could fly away from here
I wish I could cease the noise that deadens my thoughts
I wish I could filter their chatter from entering my ears
I wish that I could break away from people that think of naught

Every utterance, every rant, every curse
Cut through my mind like a lightning strike
And I find it hard to tell the duty nurse
And have her understand how I'm feeling – what it's like

I just can't take it anymore
The prodding, the pricking and endless questioning
Is there an answer or am I here forever more
A guinea pig to be experimented on without answering

My patience with this time has come to an end
I want to go home to my cat and begin
My life anew with my dearest friends
Before the reality of this place truly sinks in

Poetry By Emma Mauro

Firefly

That I could be a firefly and light up the night sky
And fly away from the troubles that hold me down
That I could wish upon a star and be whisked up high
Amongst the stars and look down on my hometown

Oh! What things I would then see to take my fears from me
What private words in quiet times would I receive
Would my heart be put at rest with the things that I would see
My anguished mind be absolved of sins it only perceives

So high above the little things and small minds I would rise
Rescued from the hell of their mediocrities
If I could bring them all with me and open up their eyes
To the amazing world waiting for them to seize

May I, humble firefly, light up their unknown paths
May I, beacon in the dark night sky, flicker on ahead
May I, flitting here and there, show them that freedom's within their grasps
And strike out boldly on pathways they had feared to tread

But alas, my feet stay earthbound and my wings don't sprout
I rue that I do not flash or flicker or emit a glow
The ones nearest me assure me that I am not without
An inner radiance that surrounds me wherever I go

So I place my faith within my own soul
That I am neither wicked nor cast of purest gold
I am a human being doing her best to be whole
Hoping to be blessed with grace and goodness as I grow old

Mr Kookaburra

Hello Mr Kookaburra, my old friend
Have you come to laugh at me again
Or just cackle along with me at my missteps
But today your laughter grates me at best

I feel very sad, tired and alone
And that big black feeling inside has grown
So please, Mr Kookaburra, you and your cheers
Leave me alone to cry my tears

Poetry By Emma Mauro

My Path Alone

Life's curiosities have always filled me with surprise
Where it places me and what opportunities arise
There is never a dull moment amongst the gentle change
And none too difficult that I can't handle, no matter how strange

I have placed all my trust in the Loving God above
Who continues to guide me with his sacred love
Each day I am blessed with my family and friends
Who walk with me to my journey's end

That Sacred Dove, that Spirit Divine
Has crafted a story so cleverly entwined
With colourful characters both good and bad
Even with fools, who will make me mad

But amongst this colour, my own story is told
At the end my soul will be made from only the purest gold
For many who are weaker would have crumbled with that I have known
Instead in the face of disaster, I have flourished and grown

Mother and Child

My sweet child
So meek and mild
Mother's love
Tender hugs
Heart not only breaking
Everyday without you is making
My mother's heart sad
But you are safe, so I am glad
You're my dearest boy
A being of purest joy
To have you safe and sound
On the most stable ground
Is more important than any gold
And I would shelter you from the dark and cold
My sweetest boy
Oh, child of joy
You bring lightness to my heart
And though we may be apart
Know that I love you with my all
Through everything, big and small

Poetry By Emma Mauro

Gentle Love

Come, gentle love. Rest easy upon me.
I am sad and afraid. I have been all I could be.
Gentle love, I need you. I don't want to fight every day
I want to rest with gentle love. I want it to stay.
I don't want to fight for affection or for someone's time.
I want to know, gentle love, you're just for me. Just mine
So, gentle love, you're the hardest of all love to find.
In the end, gentle love, you come from my mind.

Out of Darkness

No more am I lost
Although my journey has come at a high cost
I twist and turn no more
Or scratch desperately at the bottom of life's door
Instead of peering longingly at the light slipping in through cracks
I run and turn and jump gaily in the daylight I now attract

Where my voice was numb, now rests a nightingale
Where once there was an empty shell, a loving heart now prevails
Where no words could be found, songs flower and flow
Where darkness rose up and crushed me from above, now I push it below

Feet which were too heavy to walk two steps
Now dance with joy at the slightest requests
Where there was sadness so deep that I could not sing
Now there is hope and truth in every note it lets ring
Shyness, shame and sadness are no longer mine
Because I am a being of light, a part of the divine

But I know that there in the corners
And in the shadows lurk my depressors and condemners
I must remember that they will always be here
But that I need not give in just because they are near

I am me. I am I. I am nothing more. I am nothing less.
The only thing I can be sure of is I am always loved and blessed.

Poetry by Jennifer Sabharwal

Hearing Voices

You heard the rain, I heard voices.
You heard the ocean, I heard voices.
You heard the wind, I heard voices.
You heard everything, I heard voices.

But you never knew, never had an ounce of an idea,
That I was deaf to the worlds sounds.
I never told, just kept my world, to my-self.

Then I met Ron Coleman and was introduced
To voice profiling and voice dialoguing, and
Wow wow wow.....

I hear the rain
I hear the ocean
I hear the wind
I hear everything.

But you never knew, never had an ounce of an idea,
That I am not deaf to the worlds sounds.
I never told, just kept my world, to my-self.

To you I am always Jennifer.

Poetry by Jane Grace

The Girl Who Writes Poems For People On The Bus

I love her so
She collects bus tickets and bottle tops
Shiny things
Glittering things
Spangling/glinting on the black gravel
Blinking
Her heart is cloudless
Her love is verite
She has no stain.

She rustles in her bag for found objects:
A plastic tomato
A multi-flattened ring pull
A broken hair slide.

Treasures fit for a burgundy velveteen cushion.

Poetry by Michael Ellem

'The Bird Kite'

I fly the bird kite on the beach,
Letting it out slowly,
The feather wings move slowly in the breeze,
I can feel it stretching,
Stretching my sinews and mind,
Ripping the feather bird, ripping apart my thoughts,
I inform some sunbakers that it is stretching,
And ripping the feather bird to shreds,
They laugh when I tell them that Le Tan won't help.

The bird kite gets caught in a tree,
Its feather wings flapping furiously in the breeze,
The fishing line tightens around its leg,
I climb the tree, out along the branch,
And can feel it stretching my sinews and mind,
Ripping apart my thoughts, ripping apart the feather bird,
It is shivering in my hand.

I tell some picnickers under the tree,
That it is stretching and shredding the feather bird,
They laugh when I tell them that bourbon won't help.

'Awakening'

Through the haze,
Sharp, penetrating clarity,
The mist disperses under the heat,
Of feelings, physicality, sexuality,
And my being erupts into a whirl,
Of words and love,
Of anger and angst,
Until it settles,
Under a cloud of clarity.

Poetry by Zoe

Eclipse Of The Moon

Heartache.
Deepest depression.
Downward spiral
Into the Devil's cave.

Loss of beloved friend.
Loss of family member.
At a point
Where no return
Can come.

Find company
With the Devil's drink.
Heartbroken soul.
Hopeless loser.
Feeling useless.
Feeling empty.

Dark forces eat up
Joy
and happiness
Of spring
and summer.
Missed opportunities.

Stark
Raving
Lunatic
SCREAMING
Why me?

Poetry by Di Lymbury

Beauty Deep

I can hear your anguish but I cannot share your pain
I can see it's hurting to take this road again
I can never know exactly how it feels
I've not lived your life, nor experienced your ordeals

I can hear your music, its melancholy tune
I can see your life in the shadow of the moon
I can see your golden gifts across our small worlds strewn
I try to reach out but I know it's way too soon

I can see your depth, so great that it transcends
I can feel the shallowness of worthless long lost friends
I can hear your loneliness, although your smile pretends
I will sit beside and value time I spend

I can see you're sensitive to all the needs of others
I can feel your love of your sisters and your brothers
I can hear your yearnings from underneath life's covers
I can touch the anguish of your fathers and your mothers

Why can't others see and open wide their blinds?
Why can't they feel those extra precious gemstone finds?
Why can't they hear the beauty of a rare and brilliant mind?
Let's open up our senses for the melioration of mankind

The Star Is You

You're the exception
You are unique
There are no reproductions
Not like an antique
You are the only
One who can know
How you're the star
Of your very own show
Value your differences
What sets you apart
Resist as the world
With its giant bleeding heart
Tries to insist
You need to conform
This one star stands out
From a meteor storm
Make it your goal
You rare individual
Stand proud of yourself
Until it's habitual

Poetry by Di Lymbury

My Shame

Stigma is a barrier
'Cos it slams the door
On many opportunities
You can no more explore
Born of fear it tethers us
Can't stand it any more
Let us all conjoin today
Ban stigma I implore

Look behind the shrouded veil
Sometimes used to cover
A distinct and unique person is
What you may discover
If we're open, more accepting
The joys we may uncover
Don't be scared to have a go
And change your life forever

So when you next see anything
That presents a challenge
Nose piercings and those tattoos
That cause an auto-kringe
Close your eyes and open minds
And take a mighty plunge
Let's work together starting now
Our bias's to expunge

We all know wondrous people
Who've battled and who've won
Our lives would be much poorer
If they're the one's we'd shun
We ALL have mental challenges
And sometimes don't catch on
But that's no reason to banish us
No reason to poke fun

Who says you're more important
Than the other ones you meet
Who has the right to judge them
Their differences mistreat
Let us all unlock our hearts
And not act with conceit
And work towards a future
Where Stigma's obsolete.

Poetry by Di Lymbury

High Life

My heart breaks for you
My fathers and mothers
Who stand to the side
As our sisters and brothers
You try to advise
And try not to smother
They were offered one path
But they chose another
They cannot see
The danger therein
You stand sadly there
And know you can't win
My heart breaks for you

My heart aches for you
My fathers and mothers
Who cannot find answers
Your lives fraught with druthers
You seek in your pain
To reach out to others
You aim to keep safe
Our sisters and brothers
This love child is lost
It's futile to try
You'll never give up
Nor stop wondering why
My heart aches for you

My heart quakes for you
My dads and my mums
You ordinary folk
Ill prepared for these crumbs
That your children have left you
Your mind simply numbs
How does your baby now
Live in these slums?
There's no dignity left
They chase their next high
It's a mighty cruel theft
You accede, say goodbye
My heart quakes for you

My heart shakes with you
My parents worldwide
You're facing a war
And there's nowhere to hide
You can't see your enemy
It's hidden inside
You can't hold your head up
You've lost all your pride
We're all in denial
We shy right away
'Til together we stand up
And have something to say
My heart shakes with you

Poetry by Di Lymbury

Forever Sowing Seeds

Those who care for others are an extraordinary breed
Those who care for others clearly see what others need
Those who care at times find that others do not heed
It's then the wise ones know they can only plant a seed

Those who care sometimes find it is a thankless task
Yet carers rarely give up and you'll rarely see them ask
For recognition, they don't seek glory in which to bask
When things don't go well, disappointment they will mask

Carers are often willing, time and time again
To forgive and to forget and at times they count to ten
It sometimes tests their patience and they sometimes do not ken
Carers rely on all their wits and become the wisest men

These golden people who put other's needs before their own
Have found a secret joy; that through caring they have grown
They know its of no use so they rarely groan and moan
The commitment to care, for them, is for life, not just on loan

So thank you special carers, let's celebrate all you do
Thank you for never giving up and seeing the caring through
It's clear without your efforts many would have no one to turn to
You are the ones who join us all together, a magic social glue!

Beauty Deep

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I can see it's hurting to take this road again
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You rare individual
Stand proud of yourself
Until it's habitual

Beyond Questions

I feel the stinging, haunted eyes upon me
I hear the lost and crumpled, crippled shape
I sense the rancid tastes of ignobility
I know the deepest yearnings of escape

I gesture in the vain hope that you'll notice
The love I try so desperately to send
You are but a stranger and a novice
To the bitterness with which I now contend

I slowly reach my hand up to the glass
A hand that aches to hold you in embrace
Hanging tightly I won't let this moment pass
This memory burns so deep it scores a trace

The tears that sear a scar right down my cheek
Spark a flame so great it will not die
Silence is forever dead. I speak
With intensity I perpetually question why

Poetry by Di Lymbury

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'Cos it slams the door
On many opportunities
You can no more explore
Born of fear it tethers us
Can't stand it any more
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Good Question!

Complexities crowd and swirl
Amidst intermingling light
Anxieties hover impatiently
Bracing for a fight

Obsessions barge through
Walking a sheer drop
Demanding they have a say
Compulsions talk shop

Overwhelming sadnesses
Impossible to climb
Back onto that mountain
Where outlooks are sublime

Lowered self esteem
With vulnerabilities bare
Unforgiving self-talk
What messages to share?
Tiny cracks slip open
"What's normal?" someone asks
The answer is "All people
Hiding under masks"

Poetry By Jennifer Sabharwal

My Voices

Is there someone there tonight?
Please just hold me tight.

Is there someone there tonight?
Please don't let me out of your sight.

Is there someone there tonight?
Please no need to fight.

Is there someone there tonight?
Please show me the light.

Is there someone there tonight?
Please make it alright.

Is there someone there tonight?
Please be my knight.

Is there someone there tonight?
Talk with your might.

Is there someone there tonight?
Please just hold me tight.

Your Voices

Did you talk to your voices today?
Did they say hi, or go away?

Do they resent you, because you give them no time?
Their sniggers retaliating, like bitter lime.

Be calm and try to chat.
Tell them to clarify their opinion of you.
And ask them how, they came to that.

Find the message in their cryptic converse.
And if they're right give them more time,
It's what their worth.

Did you talk to your voices today?
Did they say hi or go away?

Poetry by Glenda

Recovery

On the ground was a stone.
Just an ordinary-looking stone.

It had rough edges and a bit of dirt on it.
It had patches of brown and black colour,
with a bit of white here and there.
It wasn't a particularly attractive stone.

Somehow it got picked up.
It got washed and cleaned.

Then it had a big change –
it was split open.

And inside was
a diamond.
A beautiful, crystal-clear diamond.

Uncut and unpolished,
but a diamond none-the-less.

Just waiting to be nurtured
so it could sparkle and shine brightly
and be the best diamond it could be.

Poetry by Anne-Marie Avalos

Hide and Seek

I go to a place
Quiet a public place
A place where I do not know
Not one single face.

I take a seat where I sit alone
Afraid as by them
I am not known

I am new to this place
To those people as
They are new to me

Do I stand up?
Do I dare to speak?
Make my self-noticed
To the whole entire street
Do I stay seated, very quiet?

Not a noise, not a squeak
Not to be noticed
Play hide and seek!

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And if they're right give them more time,
It's what their worth.

Did you talk to your voices today?
Did they say hi or go away?

Poetry by Anne-Marie Avalos

Nothing to Say!!

From dawn to dusk
I am surrounded by people
Who I love and trust

But not you,
You were there
From the beginning
But have long gone
And won't be returning

I was just a glimmer in your eye
I was with you and together
We grew just for a while
Then you went away with nothing
Nothing at all to say

I grew without you
From strength to strength
Lived from day to day
Wondering if you would
Ever, ever have anything to say

Well today was my birthday
You still know where to be seen
Still nothing to say
But you are forgiven as I now
Have my own little glimmers in my eyes
My family whom I stand by
They are who gets my by

From dawn to dusk
They are there
The ones who
I love & trust
The ones who mean so
So very much!!

Poetry by Anne-Marie Avalos

Pain and Time

Pain what is it?

Is it pain to bring a new life into the world?

Is it pain when we lose some one?

Or is it pain when we get hurt in other ways.

So many different types of pain

So many ways to deal with it

So many expressions and feelings to go through

But why I ask?

Why do we need to experience this

Thing we all know as pain?

I know it's not always for sad reasons

That we go through it

Sometimes we endure such pain

For happiness.

Are we all strong enough for all

The different strengths of pain

That life will bring us?

I don't know

As we are all

Very different.

But time is the essence of

Our life

And in time I am told

The pain will shift

Good or bad.

I am strong like you

And every one

We can all get

Through pain together

With each other

In time.

Poetry by Taryn Rau

Rotten apples

A tall dark apple tree stood on its own,
it was big and proud, but dark and alone,
until came along a heart that was broken, shattered and wrecked,
the tree could tell she was tired and withdrawn as she wept,
he let her wait underneath his wide girth,
she was drawn to the cold, dark, sheltered earth.

She waited not thinking of time or space,
she left the world behind, it moved at the same pace,
it looked faster to her as she refused to join in,
she felt beaten and lost... she let the darkness win.

She sat, she dreamt, she wished, she wondered,
she retched, she screamed, she pondered.
As she held her knees close to her chest,
she longed for nothing but sleep and rest.

But then autumn came so the tree began to cry,
his leaves and rotten apples fell from a high,
the stench of the rotting flesh made a path to her core,
and the wriggling, crawling bugs that it drew she could not ignore.

Her shelter was gone, her cover was blown,
she let out a tired, distressed, longing moan,
the tree knew he had given all he could give,
her time was up, it was time to live.

With that she rose to her feet,
she wondered out in a daze,
knowing not what she'll meet,
she was lost in a new haze.

Her path to the tree from here is unknown,
but he helped her pause her life, he helped her postpone,
after a while the tree grew old and its branches fell by its side,
it crumbled and withered and eventually died.

Poetry by Taryn Rau

The girl returned after being broken once more,
she would not leave this time, she would stay, she swore.
But when she saw the tree was no longer,
she grew fierce, angry and stronger.

She turned around and marched straight back,
but she moved with purpose and poise down a different track,
she now knew that hearts were made of glass.
and minds are not easily mended,
that the cruelty of the world is mostly unintended.
That tress of shelter die and wither away,
and that there is nowhere in this life that you can permanently stay.

High/low

There is a caged animal inside a shell,
that shell is the caged animals hell.
It wants out, its roaring and in distress.
but the shell is containing this mess.
The animal rears, screams and shouts,
its angry, frustrated and needs to get out.
The shell is tired and weak,
harmony and sleep it will seek.
The battle rages between the two.
one wants to conquer,
the other to be conquered.
But neither know what they have to do.