

Twelve River RIPPLES

Member's Poems



Lambing Snows

Her face slumps on the screen,
a shadow staring from the pillow.
The carer has set black headphones
on her untrimmed hair,
giving her the air of a crazed DJ.
We on our side, brightly lit,
smile and gaily call her name
across the internet, waving
for a sign of recognition.
Slowly her chin slips down
below the edge.
Soon there's nothing left
but to send our love.
We say goodbye. She whispers,
see you soon. I cry.

Today a biting wind blows
from the north, flurrying thin
snowflakes round the sun
as we take our hour's exercise
across deserted fields.
My face aches with cold.
There was a time I'd have phoned
to let her know, Mum, guess what
it's snowing here, and she, remembering
it's April, would reply, that'll be
the lambing snows.

Sheila Lockhart

Truth

It's in the pool not the waterfall,
the suck of a lamprey, not its tail,
the glint of a mackerel, not the shoal
and a hermit crab in shallow sea.

It's here in this pebble, not the shore,
when tide is in flood, turns, withdraws.
In a goose-winged sloop, her keel, the oars
and the safety of sheltered quays.

In the velvety dark of a glow-worm cave,
in cherished memories, not the grave,
and in the breaking, not the wave;
dune grass whipped by salty breeze.

It's in a pause between pregnant words,
in silence following resonant chords,
the stunned response before applause,
and resting piano keys.

The edge where shadow greets the light;
the gust that lifts the wings of a kite;
the pain at each departing flight;
and evening's gentle ease.

Anne Boileau

Beach Ban

The supercilious cats of Provence
watch as I walk the dog up the lane,
yet if he lingers or views them by chance,
safe at the top of steep stone steps, feign
cool aloofness. A tail softly twitches.
Oh never trust companions of witches!

Dogs in Provence often pant in the heat,
flop beneath tables snapping at flies,
hoping for scraps from their master's seat,
yapping at passers-by, rolling their eyes.
Only in winter allowed in the sea.
In summer forbidden emphatically.

For cats, such a rule makes rather good sense,
whilst dogs find this deprivation intense.

Angela Pickering

For a Ripple of Laughter

Obsessed with the Weather

While pointing to the weather map
for North South East and West,
the Meteorologist forecasts and
the British are obsessed.

Wherever on this Isle we be:
Land's End to John O'Groats,
the British man or woman rarely
leaves without a coat.

And at the merest hint of rain,
to us, it would be folly
to take the chance of getting wet.

Go out - without a broolly!

Yet there's another piece of kit
that's gone right out of fashion.

A really useful article,
embrace it with a passion.

The humble hat is what I mean,
for warmth or shading sun.

The poshest of occasions pr'aps,
or even just for fun.

But there's a problem with the hat,
especially the cap.

It tends to blow off in the wind
unless it has a strap.

I think I've found the answer and
I'm trying out a scheme

It needs a bit more testing till
I share it with the team.

'Though if I'm seen without my hat
when walking in the town

It isn't wrinkles on my brow
It's where my hat screws down!

Carole Ferguson