

Twelve River RIPPLES

Members' Poems



I Am Today

I am today, and tomorrow
I am laughter, occasionally sorrow
I am the sun on a summer's day
I am the moon when the bats come to play
I am the words found in my head
I am the memory, what was it I said?
I am the couplet that will not quite rhyme
I am the grape that gave up the wine
I am the soldier that fights for the cause
I am the pacifist who abhors all the wars
I am the river fed by the stream
I am the milk that creates the cream
I am the one who said something wrong
I am the weak, sometimes the strong
I am the giver who gives all that he can
I am the taker who knows better than
I am the guilt of things in the past
I am the play and all of the cast
I am the rhizome that hides in the ground
I am the flower where nectar is found
I am the cloud on a damp dark night
I am the breeze that makes it all right
I am the drummer keeping time on the snare
I am the worry of this world that we share
I am the child that stamps its feet
I am the smile, cheeky and sweet
I am the love found in your eye
I am the tear when it's time for goodbye
I am the sum of all of these things
I am just me.....and all that it brings!

Hugh Lake

Members' Poems cont.

Wild Child

A good woman, they say, must be silent.
I murmur against them.
Whining through keyholes,
whispering at doors,
I am stirred to rebellion.
Even the children
may be seen,
though not heard.
As for me,
I am invisible.
You must not silence my voice.

Rising from whisper to moan,
from rumble to roar,
I am viewed with suspicion.
Despised and rejected,
I disturb your peace
with my unruly noise.
Like a hurt animal, I howl,
but they do not relent.

Inquisitive, I investigate
crevices, creep along alleyways,
whistle down corridors.
Mysterious, unfathomable,
you may guess
where I came from
but my destination is...
unpredictable.
I delight to intrigue;
it is my way to deceive.

With a light touch
I caress your skin;
touch me, I am gentle.

In a moment
my feathers are ruffled,
I bristle with rage.
Towering above you,
I am ferocious,
capricious,
untameable.

When roused, I wreak havoc.
With invisible claws
I tear down buildings,
blow away roofs,
destroy villages.
When roused, I am invincible.
Know me for who I am:
I am a wild child.

Julia Duke

Members' Poems cont.

I Am The Everyday Young Man,

shut my home front door,
step through the gate, into my street
where instantly I start to disappear.
Then, gone 'round the corner,
I regain a form, a uniform.
I eye into the throng
of the weekday rush when
someone bumps me, wittingly,
a push, a shove. A voice
spits in my ear. I let it slide
along the chute
of a seasoned drum
where only I can hear it drop
to the ground, and gutter.
Across the road two people –
on the strangled flow of truth –
shine, within the thud of my soles –
the percussion of similes.
To strut prouder still I raise myself;
chin thrust and straightened spine.
On quieter pavements I see
the fear I breed in you. No fear
intended I cross the road.
See me in the bounce
of shop window reflection,
almost everyone lit up
but my complexion.
Helmets, truncheons
on a corner; four eyes
are tracing me. My heartbeat
races me, arrests: arms spread, legs
apart, I taste the stone cold floor.
And when let go, me dusted down,
I store my degradation, secure that
in the tide of the hourglass promise
lies a truer haven. I do not flee
but rush.
I'm late for work,
late amongst the multitudes.
Spot me on your empty page,
this world, a universe;
etiolated but not dimmed.
Tense. I'm a black young man.
Step, step, step. Safe, safe...., or not.

Jacques Groen

For a Ripple of Laughter

Wardrobe

I'm a wardrobe.
A bit Freudian?
Ok, I'm not a wardrobe
but my clothes are feeling heavy on me,
and there's lots of them.
Many of my shirts are from Burtons, in the seventies
and my boys reckon my trousers must be pre-war.
'Scruffy, Dad.'
They're not specific but I know they mean World War
Two.
Not even the Falklands?
'No, Dad.'
They suggest I 'lose' ninety percent of my old clobber
and offer to take me (drag me?) to some designer shops
on the King's Road or Regent Street.
I'm up for a trip to the Smoke, I answer
but I don't want to be re-designed, re-branded,
and I wouldn't mind going to the Tower again,
(it's been a long time),
but they joke that I fancy buying myself a suit of armour,
(a conversation piece at parties?)
'Maybe, Dad'
We visit Boss and Ted Baker and a few others
and now I'm a new man, fully kitted out.
'Smart, Dad.'
I'm my own new trendy wardrobe,
much lighter than before.
I wonder what Freud would make of that.

Jon Mecham