

Poetry Series

Heather Reid
- poems -

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Heather Reid(02/11/1963)

A Pit Pony's Lot

Mallifluent eyes searched the mind of the man,
As the cracked leather trappings were cast over her back,
Why did he do this again and again,
The man at the gaping mouth of the black.

Here day will perish into continual night,
Fertil colours cling to the edges of time,
Shadows dissipate and are gone with the light,
Leaving only transient memories to shine.

Darkness has stolen the sight from her eyes,
Although open, dead orbs in their sockets remain,
The heart in her chest urges her to go on,
Lame on the hooves that are tender and blane.

Cutting underfoot, the shale unsympathetic,
How un-natural the smell of this underground world,
Moonless shapes are all her mind can envisage,
Not a field or a hedge or the song of the Merle.

No comforting fingers run over her flank,
In her metal full mouth no taste of the Skirret,
But a stinging reminder, whipped with a willow branch,
Pushes deeper a broken lost spirit.

Accepting her sufferance she starts her decline,
Torturous steps pick a perilous path,
In an airless chasm she waits in a line,
The smell of mans'sweat hangs heavy in the shaft.

Knocking and chipping, Picks echo on rock,
The blasts of explosions send deep distant sound,
Any life that she had before this is forgot,
Before she moved cart loads of coal from the ground.

The wooden burden that follows her round on her trek,
Does not go away but remains like the pain,
As she leans into the leather around her neck,
Her muscles burn as she takes up the strain.

With the cart fully loaded she tries to move on,
Remaining, her head's roughly seized,
She can no longer do this for the man in the dark,
Collapsing she falls to her knees.

Broken-winded and sallow her life ebbs away,
She dies in the death that she lived in,
The man in the dark has nothing to say,
Nor the pony that passes her, limping...

Heather Reid

Another One For The Animals

God had sent Noah back onto his boat,
To save the hens, pigs, cows and goats,
Environment issues of which he kept note,
Needed a flood to keep Noah afloat.

He was told that livestock took up too much room,
That's when he sent his first monsoon,
They pollute the rivers, lakes and seas,
And are the root of our greenhouse gasses,
At least that's what He'd been told by the masses.

So our Mother Earth is down on her knees,
'And what have they done to all of my trees? '
Noah said 'But surely God
Today's agriculture's a bit of a sod,
Seventy percent of fresh water they use,
Of which the animal is often refused.

God gave a sigh and asked Noah why,
He said most humans on earth had grown greedy,
They want more for less and only the best,
They take and don't give, they have no respect,
And they never take time to sit and reflect.

Then I suggest you get my animals out,
For after the flood I'll be sending a drought,
They can argue, fight and blame who they like,
Don't they realize they can't be doing it right.

My animal numbers are now in decline,
One third of amphibians gone,
One fifth of my mammals extinct,
An eighth of all birds are threatened aswell,
Go quickly Noah and save them from Hell.

Noah set off in his boat the next day,
When he reached land he knew straight away,
That things were not going to plan,
The rivers polluted the land had been raped,

The forest depleted and what? For whose sake?
More grazing for the animals ending up on a plate,
A sad state of affairs, a legacy of debt.

He found natural resources were also at risk,
Nature is struggling, unbalanced and sad,
When it thinks of the wealth it once had,
Deforestation and lack of habitat,
Had certainly put paid to all that.

The air was polluted, acid rain stung Noah's face,
He thought he best hurry and get the job done,
Life on earth for the animals can't be much fun.

When he found the cows they were all in carts,
Not a blade of grass could be seen,
Fed and milked twice a day by cold machine,
The carts moved around by way of remote,
Noah took all of them back to his boat.

The chickens he found were stacked up in a cage,
Nothing to stand on but wire,
He thought, when will this cruelty abate,
Of this do the humans not tire,
He opened the cages and took all the birds,
Went back to his boat too choked for words.

The slaughter house was where he found pigs,
They were born and bred right next door,
Then hung upside down with a hook through their gut,
Their shameful bodies not just for the poor,
Fattened and pre-packed for the store.
He was disheartened by what he had seen,
The human race was in disgrace,
He thought all of them foolishly green.

Heather Reid

Gravy Train

To be read in the rhythm of a train.

Treasure it, launder it, ride a gravy train,
If the poor had lots of it would they remain the same?
Windfall, solvent, wealthy, rolling, rich,
Coinage, currency, it doesn't matter which,
Buy a house buy a car, money makes you what you are,
Be a banker on a pension, did Sir Fred Goodwin get a mention,
Affluent, rolling, flush, prospects of the great gold rush,
Noble metal bullion, Maundy money that's the one!
Hush money, pin money, revenue, spends,
Here a dollar, there a dollar, everywhere a dillar dollar,
Brass loot dosh dough, share it with your friends,
But if it is to stay that way, never ever lend!
Cash for questions, information, cash to give you inspiration,
Have a baby get a flat: Government will pay for that.
DLA, JSA, my giro didn't come today,
Crisis loan, budget loan, tax payers you're on your own,
Repossession, shortfall, deficit, dole,
On the streets the drug barons barter with your soul,
Counterfeit, embezzlement, extortion, guns, death.
Just tell me where the money is with your dying breath.

Heather Reid

My Pet By Rover

When it's time for walks she'll take a ball,
But that's not what it's about at all,
She'll sit down to read her paper news,
While I get mine from the soles of shoes.
My information is on the streets,
Who I've missed and who I've yet to meet,
I will cock my leg most anywhere,
to let other's know that I've been there.
I sprinkle on the wheel of a car,
If I want my news to travel far,
For local news I'll ease my bladder,
Right on the window cleaner's ladder.
Lamp posts and bus stops all have their clues,
The canine version of her Who's Who,
Herbacious boarders, any corners,
Bring me news of local faunas.
Bollards and railings and walls and weeds,
Sometimes she'll drag me past all these,
Perhaps she is saving herself some time,
To me this behaviour is a crime.
I'll have to bark to go out later,
And she wonders why I chew her paper!
Stronger news is spread at first,
Then it comes in quick short bursts.
I'll smell and taste, she'll see and hear,
My poo's just waste not Rothermere.
The large pile I leave behind the gate,
to us dogs it's not like 118,
There's no info in poo at all,
You could say our writings on the wall.
I must admit though, I do enjoy,
The scented poo bags she'll employ,
But why does she go to all that fuss,
Just to chuck it in the nearest bush.
She'll get a fine if they're forgot,
Her laws a load of tommy rot,
See poo is biodegradable,
But in her bag that's not possible.
I think she should let me just be free

To smell and run and poo and wee,
If not, as best friends we'll get on fine,
I'll still love that old human pet of mine.

Heather Reid

Normal Addiction

I grieve for the me that has gone.

The ONE.

The one I used to be before the Prince on his horse
galloped up to my gate and gave me some pills. They were great.

I look into my dark corners when I find the spare time and find different aspects
of why and who I am.

The me bits that the pills chase out.

Without them, do I have any clout?

I grieve for the forced future I faced.

A force within a force without reason,
a force that was wild and self pleasing,

Now forced to think differently, meds see to that.

Do they work or prevent? Am I calm or Hell bent?

My thoughts never last so I have no past, cast or faith,

The force it is strong and I think it's just daft as I pour medications out into my
palm. After all where's the harm?

So well what the hell!

Is the self that needs fixing really that broke or just missing a stroke? It works
but works different.

Could that be why I scream at the sky in the dark in the night and during the
day,

At work and at play?

I have many dark corners.

I am not all I appear, but more than I seem and some of my life is mapped out in
a dream.

Seeking sanity seems only the stuff of dreams, unattainable unreal,

Always a hitch a hiccup a hike to the one who is normal,

please Prince get it right!

With your dopamine disturbing yellows and whites. Do they make it all right?

In antipsychotic lands I walk in the name of the sane but I think it's a shame.

That the ONE is long gone.

Heather Reid

The Posh House With The Poodle Up The Lane (Albert And The Lion Parody)

You've 'eard ow young Albert Ramsbottom
At the zoo up at Blackpool one year
With a stick with a horses head handle
Gave a lion a poke in the ear.

Well I'm not the type to upstage him
Wot I got to say really came true
When I took the dog out up a dark lane
I say I thought I was dead too.

I took my dog out for his duties
And I let him off the lead to run free
But he ran into someone's front garden
And immediately started to pee.

I said straight away I was sorry
As his lead was unclasped in my hand
Then he spotted their dog through the window
And ignored all my forceful demands.

For inside he set off at a gallop
The plush draylon suite was right there
We all heaved in the door hole together
Well the wife just stood there and stared.

The white shag pile carpet was buggered
The dogs legged it round the front room
Muddy paw marks were scattered all over
I saw the wife starting to swoon.

The wellies I wore were quite funny
The design on them was jelly tots
But I'd stood in some poo in the darkness
It was there in the footprints in clots.

I went back to the door and I shouted
But nothing seemed to do any good

I'll kill him I will when I get him out
The wife's face had now drained of all blood.

Things by now were getting quite heated
And the dogs jumping up didn't help
And so in the din I quickly nipped in
Held by the scruff he let out a yelp.

The house was in a terrible mess
The white carpet with poo trampled in
And just as I was about to retreat
The wife poured a wobbly gin

I asked the price of the cleaning bill
After all my dog had been the pest
I said we could be best friends after this
The wife had a cardiac arrest.

She died the wife the very next day
I somehow feel I was to blame
One thing I can say for quite certain
Is I didn't go back up that lane.

And so here my story has ended
I no longer go out in the dark
But you'll never guess what happened one day
When I let him off the lead in the park...

Heather Reid

Who?

Unfolding desire
Emerging delight
Opening out
Procuring life's light
I transcribe description
with clarity of sight
It's me the struggling poet!

Heather Reid