

Poetry Series

F R Wills
- poems -

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F R Wills(06/12/00)

F R Wills was born in West Yorkshire and is inspired by the beautiful scenery of the Dales. She loves to write poems and short stories and to read fiction.

A Mark That Can't Be Erased-

When thoughts can be punished and history
Changed with a few hastily typed alterations
What is existence? Why does war matter
If it is a perpetually occurring event?

If the world believes four is five
Then is it? What is history but
Pages in a textbook and centuries
Old skeletons? - conjecture is all

We have as proof. No fossils can
Provide the concrete evidence we
Crave. So we trust. Did we not believe
That Boudica was called Boadicea?

And did that change the fact that she
Died fighting for our country? But
Boadicea has ceased to exist. Just as
The dinosaurs who have been found

To be two halves jumbled together
Have ceased to exist. But the question is
If we believed them to exist then do they?
Is existence in memories and the mind

Enough? To be the sole enlightened person
In a society is insanity. So what is morality?
Who are we to distinguish right from wrong?
Left from right? A colourblind person would

swear that blue is red. And what I think
Is green is different to what you think
How strange that makes our art teachers.
When they say mix this colour or that.

If in the end, you can be erased from the world
With simply the burning of a few documents
You know you have not lived, only existed.
So make your mark, a mark that's impossible

to erase. Because every life should be
remembered. We may only be cogs in a
Vast machine. But we are individuals. We
Are entitled to our thoughts and feelings.

When thoughts can be punished and history
Changed with a few hastily typed alterations
What is existence? Why does war matter
If it is a perpetually occurring event?

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With simply the burning of a few documents
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So make a mark that's impossible to erase.

F R Wills

Am I The Enemy?

Gunshots pierce the peace
Tanks trample the track
They came with their loaded guns,
Forced us out of our homes

They threatened me –what could I do?
They shoved me down the road
The gun's cold steel against my back
They threatened me – what could I do?

I heard the screams of my friends
Innocents like you
I wanted to save them
But, they threatened me, what would you do?

I see you- your eyes cold as ice
You wear their uniform
You pull the trigger
Watch without a shred of remorse as I fall

The blood pours from my gaping wound,
My life flashes through my eyes- I see my daughter,
My body drops,
You've slain an enemy,
Am I the enemy?

Will you remember me?
As the light faded from my blue eyes?
Will the memory of my scarlet blood pooling haunt you?
Or will you never give me a second thought?
The man who you murdered in cold blood,
Am I the enemy?

F R Wills

Bubbles Fill Our World

We must remember that we are nothing
Compared to stars, we are just a speck
And that's calming as we move steadily on our course
Like the planets orbiting a ball of gas and dust

We oft' forget the worlds
That surround us- seeming
As they do to be interwoven with
Ours and yet they are so distant from us

Microcosms are everyday life
For most as they wake surrounded
By familiar faces, the same old town - view
Never changing like the sea as it crashes on stretching sands

Some claim to be the centre of
The universe and while improbable
It's easy to believe it when, in your eyes
The world does seem to revolve around you

Bubbles fill our world
Houses of stone and mortar
That enclose sleeping loved ones
Or the planets orbiting a ball of gas and dust

We must remember that we are nothing
Compared to stars, we are just a speck and that's calming
Like watching the sea move eternally and feeling small in comparison
It's easy to forget worries or fears if you think wider, nothing really matters at all

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Nothing really matters at all.

F R Wills

Castle:

Crumbling walls caked in moss and ivy, like mascara stains running down her cheeks. Curved foundations to resist attack, just like her sharp hand-painted nails. There were no cracks in her defences, no arrow loops for my words to permeate. But there was no moat, and the drawbridge would have been easy to find, had I cared enough to search for it and cut the ropes away- forever. But that's Ancient History, medieval. I'm going through my own personal Renaissance. She can fall to ruin for all that I care about it. That is a lie. There may now be a moat between us, a grassy mound and a metallic grate. You can send out your Knights to destroy a Damsel such as myself. I will not try to break down the walls and defences that surround you. And I will only ask whether you feel trapped or protected or both. Because you left me as a traitor, to rot in a solitary cell. While you dance the Volta with your adoring courtiers on the flagstone floors that double as my prison's ceiling. The peels of your laughter setting me reeling and the reek of your hypocrisy flooding my weak lungs. Whilst you secure a future for your royal line and drag my name through dirt, I can see the future of your façade, I can see it fall to wrack and ruin and become overgrown. With fine lines and aching bones, your fortress and once worshipped visage- crumbled, faded. What will be their worth then, these so-called flatterers who follow your every command? What is money and fame worth when your body turns to sand? Will you remember me- at the final battle, during the final stand? Or is this just a fantasy that's gotten out of hand? There may never be a chance for me to put this into words, but I know that you were overcome, a conquest and crusade. I know that it's not fair of me to act as though betrayed. There is nothing wrong with exiling someone from your life; nothing innately wrong with causing havoc and in turn strife. But in the way you're crumbling- I can see the conscience there. You wish that you had treated me in a way that was fair. And yet that's not how these things end, and if it were that's just pretend. Because a princess of the realm, could never fall so far as to accept the hand of a commoner like me. A Castle's walls don't just keep out the elements, they keep her in captivity. So, if it matters anymore please let me tell you this. There is nothing to forgive; no feud to be dismissed. A Castle can be ruined and overcome by nature's power. Just like a summer's day is ended with a dismal shower. She stands there on the hill, framed against the sky. The towers rise above; all enemies defy. But- she still crumbles and will surely die.

F R Wills

Christmas Is Not Christmas..

Christmas is not christmas
When you are alone
Christmas is not christmas
Without a family or a home

Christmas is just a day
Another gruelling day
When you are under threat
And those you love have gone away

Christians all around the earth
Are facing fear and disease
Not thinking of the birth
Christmas Day is lost to these

Everyone deserves to be happy
At the best time of the year
Don't bomb people at christmas
Don't make them feel fear

It wasn't them who did it
Not these innocents that lay
Craving a peaceful 24 hours
For their christmas day

Christmas is not christmas
When you are alone
Christmas is not christmas
Without family or a home

F R Wills

Cocooned:

Cocooned or larvae, and a leaf hanging off a stem.
That's what life felt to me back then.
It wasn't certain- a fine line between safety and insecurity.
The unifying and protective force was -as usual- me.
I felt as though the blue of the sky was the grounding element
Of a feeling that was at once frightened and jubilant.
Because you would both learn to fly away and leave me here alone,
I'd pray
That it would not be so.
And I'd cocoon you so as to let you grow.
I'd shield you from things you needn't know.

But at the end of it all,
I'll have to let you go.

F R Wills

Cup:

A cup.
It seems mundane and isolated.
And yet it takes me back.
To that room, and her eyes.
But they were a disguise;
A guise to mimic a deeper fear-
Of the unknown. Of people knowing.

Of showing my deepest secret.
A coffee cup crusted with the
Remains of a Caramel Latte and
A fragile, flimsy plastic container,
Coated with a slight pink film.

Frappes were the domain of platonic coffee dates-
Not meant to be paired with real feelings.
A sugar rush- blood rush- blush.

And a heart beating against
A corset-tight ribcage
Almost tight-laced by surroundings and
Internalised preconceptions.

Dread.

Dread and the dregs of a Caramel Coffee in a bone-thin china cup.

F R Wills

Customize

Can you tell that I have demons in my head?
Unless I tell you, will you see them there?
So many times, people mistook my autism for being rude
Too many times, I've cried alone and smiled on the outside
On good days, I can be as happy as the next woman
Most days I can get by without a breakdown
In some cases, though, I spiral and it scares me
Zoning out of real life into a space where death isn't unappealing
Even so, I must go on, focus on the good days: customize my mind.

F R Wills

Danger-Deep Water Ahead

The thought of my God's people,
sends my skin peeling. I tread
silent footsteps on the stairs
towards my blissful sin.

It's hard to reconcile passion
with faith while everybody's
spitting holy water down on me-
darkness; smoke seeping from

A hole in a rotten log.
Ambience is nothing but grass
and fire. What about diversity?
A hanging basket of daffodil yellow

Sometimes beats heather purple.
Do you see? I feel walked over-
I cannot do my duty- I stumble
on edges of labels and faith.

I am lost-not found.
Danger- deep water ahead.

F R Wills

For Me

She called me strong but it's the pain that made me so.
They called me 'bitch', but I wasn't always- so
maybe they screwed us up. Not me. She.

Truthfully it scares me that I used to call it love.
It was toxic. And I knew it. But I always came back.
I had to. Until I couldn't anymore.

It taught me to value my friends. My own self esteem
paradoxically grew despite the reduction, no -destruction of my old social life.

Fair weather. Full of shit. Frightening friendship. Fully fucked up.
Now cherished, caring, constant and without conditions.
Actual mutual appreciation of each other's sheer existence.

Nothing more and nothing less needed. Being together.
I don't have to walk on eggshells or self-censor. I can
babble on for hours about nothing and everything. Safety-
that's what I'd call that feeling. Trust and comfortable silences.

Maybe I needed you at one point in my life.
And maybe you taught me who I am and who I'm never going to be like. Ever.
Really, I think it was bad luck that you were my first love and kiss.
You were all consuming, all condemning and an arrogant queen bee. But I wish
you to be happy, although you never wanted that for me.

F R Wills

Happy:

I thought that this would make me happy. But you make me second guess everything. I thought that this would make me happy. But it has all come to just nothing. I thought that this would make me happy. They promised me that love would come. I thought that this would make me happy. I forgot that my feelings go way past fun. I thought that this would make me happy. I guess I forgot how my mind works. I thought that this would make me happy. Forgetting the insecurity that in me lurks. I thought that this would make me happy. But I don't think you will ever see. I thought that this would make me happy. But who could truly ever love me? I thought that this would make me happy. But in the end, it's gone to bad. I thought that this would make me happy so why I am I so bloody sad?

F R Wills

Heaven

My heaven will be a land of memories,

My heaven will be brim-full of loved ones.

My heaven will be an avenue of trees.

My heaven, singing at the top of my lungs.

Our heaven will hold all the good in the world

Our heaven will hold all the best locations

Our heaven will be true luxury unfurled

Our heaven will let us pursue vocations

His heaven will be a reward for the tests.

His heaven will prove his true benevolence.

His heaven, free of mortality and stress.

His heaven, for mankind a real renaissance.

Heaven, like hugs and spontaneous laughter-

Paradise from then and ever after.

F R Wills

Helpless

Sitting there helpless,
'cause there's nothing
you can do.
When they're crying.

Wanting to stop
Those silent tears,
wrap them up;
In loving arms.

Shaking with laughter;
But their cheeks
Are wet. It hurts
and I can't help.

Useless-what kind
of person are you?
Can't help them,
Can't even hold them.

So you clench your fists.
Make yourself busy.
Wishing to tell them,
How perfect they are.

In your eyes.
They can be so strong,
but crumble at
the slightest thing.

And all you want to do,
Is scream and shout.
Make them stop,
'cause they're tearing you apart.

Sitting there helpless,
Because there's nothing
you can do
To heal them.

F R Wills

Hope Is Just A Word; That Melody Makes My Spirits Soar

The gunshots still ring;
Like sirens wailing
Inside my mind
They fill my senses

The sound takes me back
To the shrapnel
And churned up mud
Of the battle field

My throat burns
At the memory
Of myself, shouting:
Until my throat was raw

No use,
They couldn't hear me
And then I felt it
Like a bubble bursting

Suddenly everything stopped
The world kept spinning
We kept charging
And all I could hear was the gunshot

The gunshots still ring;
Like sirens wailing
Inside my mind
They fill my senses

When I came home,
I skipped the celebrations
They sent the medal in the post
It's lost in some drawer or other

I lost it all

And they gave me this
This scrap of metal
Carved with a name that I barely recognise

I lock myself away
From friends; family
No one can see me
Like this

The gas burned my throat
Flames that licked
My voice -box
Leaving it dry

When I try to speak
It comes out like I'm coughing
Every breath I take-
Catches in my throat

I used to sing
I sometimes wander down
The twisting alleyways
Of my memories and hear my favourite song

Or at least
I think that I do
It's only faint,
But the tune is so familiar -

That it could be nothing else
It fills me to the head
With morning sunrises
And glistening snow

Hope is a word
That I have long given up on-
But that melody,
Makes my spirits soar

And anything seems possible-
I'm back there

Next to the record player
Just letting the notes wash over me

I bask in them
Like they are sunrays
Warming my soul-
Pulling out of practice lips into a smile

I try to reach out-
To grasp the notes,
Hear them
Feel hope again

So, I go -
To the record player
And I put on my song
And let it spin

It turns and turns,
So constant-
That it's comforting
And I feel my body sway

I can't hear the beat,
But in that movement-
That constant turning,
Somehow- I can feel the rhythm

And I open my mouth
And I'm singing
And my lungs are on fire
But I don't care

I have to stop-
To drink-
But I start again
And suddenly I can hear it

I can hear my voice
And for once, the sound
Of gunshots and sirens-

Fades to silence

Replaced by the melody;
Replaced by hope,
I find the medal -
It may be just a scrap of metal:

But it's hope
And I just sang again,
And the silence-
That deafening silence-

Is finally over
Hope is just a word,
But that melody
Makes my spirits soar.

F R Wills

I Am Still Without You

The water cascades in a cacophony of colour-
I am without you.

The moss moulds to the rugged rocks-
I can exist without you.

There is light reflecting off aqua depths and pebbles shine like metal-
God, I miss you.

The air is full of sunlight and it caresses my skin, there is bird song in my ears-
but I do not have you.

Or your eyes.

Or your smile.

I am alone in the most idyllic natural scene imaginable.

So why am I still empty? More numb than a void or vacuum.

There is algae thriving in the pool of water and lichen on the trees. A living
indicator.

But I can't call this existence living.

A world without you by my side does not look colourless and bland but I am
disillusioned with its beauty.

Beauty baffles but bottles beatify my sorrows and I cannot let go of the memory
of you.

I am lost and willing on woe from wanting you. When wonder won't remain, what
will?

Not you. Nor I. Or anything like the person I used to be when you thought you
loved me.

Oblivious, the water cascades in a cacophony of colour-and
I am still without you.

F R Wills

I Don't Like Flowers:

I was scared of flowers- Of how they'd taste,
Scared that love would go to waste.
But talking to you felt right inside
And I knew that wasn't something to hide.

So I told you I loved you and you said it back
But each time we met I'd a heart attack.
She frowns always except when with you,
She's open and honest and knows what is true.

I left you for safety, my closet, a boy.
I left you but god I hate seeing your joy.
And that's selfish, and awful. As I broke your heart.
But I wish I'd known then that we needn't part.

Because loving you, hugging you, kissing you too.
Those are the things that I wanted to do.
I don't like flowers, or the way they taste.
I don't like his flowers, I don't like his face.

Your visage, your words and the way my heart raced.
Those are the things that can't be replaced.
I messed up, I'm sorry, but I want you to know.
I fell deep in love with you during that show.

I'd watch you sing, transfixed and confused.
I hate that I could ever make you feel used.
You deserve so much more, than my closeted lies.
And I think that you've found her, I see it in your eyes.

So let's call it even, and smile in the halls.
I wish that back then, I'd let down my walls.
But that's not what happened, and that I can't change.
Because the bricks of our foundation are hard to rearrange.

F R Wills

I Fell In Love With You

It was neither you nor me
I can see that now.
Except that I can't.
Except that's a lie.
You must
accept and acknowledge
that this is on you;
no amount of sweet gestures
can counteract emotional abuse.
Manipulation. Putting me down
to boost your own ego.
Making me walk on eggshells
so that you could shine
brighter than anyone.
And the worst thing is
that I called that love.
I fell in love with
someone who was
manipulative and controlling.
Arrogant and unhinged,
I fell in love with you.

F R Wills

I Should Not Pretend:

I saw someone today who looked just like she had done;
It was as if my memories had re-formed into a new being.
The truth is that I understood it then, like I never had before-
Why people move on without really doing so.

She was everything that I loved about you
Without the hatred I now feel mixed in.
A reminder of a forgotten history of heart racing,
Touches of skin and the woman whose feet I'd kiss if she only asked.

She even smelt like you did or maybe that was just a fabrication
Like Christmas and home and beauty and longing.
I swore to myself that I wouldn't think of you
now that we're far apart. But the truth is that

I've mentioned you far too much for that.
We had mundane conversation, but it was as if I was with you
Again. Like before.
So yes, this was all fantasy and yes, she's a new friend.

But I know that I'll never stop loving you, so I should not pretend.

F R Wills

If We Could Last

I want you to wish you took the chance to love me,
Which isn't to say that I wanted you. Not really.

I want you to curse the fact you never kissed me.
Which is to say I want you still, though we're not meant to be.

I want you to think about me all day and every night.
I wish that the way we'd ended things had been just and right.

I think that now I want you more than I ever did.
Although love for another girl was something that I hid.

You have moved on and I deserve to feel the regret I do
Because I didn't understand the way to be with you.

The fact is that I'm feeling just like Avril Lavigne
Watching you on stage and thinking of what might have been.

I've mused on the eyes of four more girls, who weren't you
Or even close. But the truth is you're the one who made me ache the most.

Maybe that's just 'cause you were the first to express interest in me
Or perhaps it's that back then I obsessed about my sexuality.

Either way it is the case that you consume my mind,
I think about you all the time and although love is blind

You've become more handsomely beautiful with the years that have passed
And I wish I had a time machine to see if we could last.

F R Wills

It Has Layers:

It has layers,
Scruffy while writing. A cloud- a stop sign.
Temporary; ink on the carpet. Acorns,
pears and figs. Retreating from beauty.
Fear of future and identity. Changed-lost.
Rocks and leaves- a maple leaf and a mug,
against a window pane. My trainers on
hot tarmac. Retreat. The arch and
marriage and commitment- improvement.
Roots but vibrato breathing-
I'm a sapling. How can this be love?
How can this be love?

F R Wills

It's Never Coming Back:

Your childhood, her friendship, the lost chance of love.
The chance to do it all again will never come.
You have to live with it. Those were your mistakes-

It doesn't matter if your cells have replaced themselves-
Your conscience persists regardless. You made mistakes.

Apologise, change, own that you were wrong.
If you want to be a good person, then you are half-way there.
You'll promise yourself not to wish away the hours
Like you used to- then find yourself staring at the clock-
Again.

Unconsciously wishing for time to pass, evening-
Weekend, holiday, Birthday, Christmas.
Suddenly a year has passed. Like it was nothing-

And though you experienced it in real time,
It's distorted now. Your intrusive thoughts focus on the bad.
Your ego emphasises the good. The truth? Somewhere in between.

But it's never coming back.
So, stop saying you've regrets.
They are futile. Just do better.

It's never coming back.
Your childhood
Her friendship
Your 'soulmate' is gone.
And the chance to do it all again...will simply never come.

F R Wills

Just Like Me

At first school gave me identity, but it also gave me her.
Its halls gave me a purpose, but also homophobic slurs.

The learning made me buzz with pride but then I drowned in it.
The success made me dizzy. I struggled under the weight of the crown.
Renown.

Nerd. Writer. Singer.
Not pretty. Not ugly.
Fake compliments. Teasing.

Letting people copy so they'd treat me kindly.
Groveling and copying actions. Hers. Cruel.

Falling for her. But declaring my love for him.
Hiding who I was and feeling like a whale in gym.

There are people who win in school and although I loved it-
for the clubs and the education, I can't quite rise above it.

It's never the book worms or quiet ones or creative types who thrive. Unless they
look like a model, their self esteem will not survive.

Desired and smart and allowed to be both. Unlike the poor girls sitting there and
waiting in desperate hope.

For someone to say they're pretty or even just passable. The girls who skip lunch
and have to wear makeup just to feel acceptable.

The girls who write poems about love rather than risking rejection.
Who suffer under the notion they're not worthy, the deception.

The girls boys claim to have had a glow up because they couldn't see past the
cliques and the stereotypes about Geeks.
Girls who are just like me.

F R Wills

Lagoon

The wooden path is not the road to you.
The blue lagoon does not lead to your arms.
The emerald leaves won't stop me being blue.
Lichen caked wood won't hide away the harm.
I can't see sky without seeing your eyes.
Can't swim in water and forget your touch.
The sun can't kiss me like you did, that's lies.
Nothing but you inspires me very much.
I know I should be grateful for the view.
But somehow I cannot lose myself
I focus on the love I shared with you.
Although I know such grief's not good for health.
The sun, the water, the trees and the sky
Don't look the same when you've seen your love die.

F R Wills

Life After Love

I don't love you
I swear It everyday
The words are natural
As your name once was on my lips

I used to worship your every word
Follow you with misty eyes
Smile at the sound of your voice
Obsession

Jealousy burning
Crazed confusion
Do I wish for you
Or just wish you alone?

Do my feelings still remain?
Or are the butterflies just remnants
Of forgotten summer days?
When loving flew on the breeze

I still pair your name
with I love you
I still compare your name
With mine

To you I compare everyone
Perfect?
'The one'
was I blind?

Blissful dreams
Filled with you
Singing me sweet love songs
Holding me in your arms

What is love?
The pain that burns you
When alone
confusion?

Is love eternal
Or just a game
Is faith a show?
Always played the same

perilous perfection
Wasted smiles
flying is just falling slowly
True love always leaves you lonely

F R Wills

Loss:

Just when I thought that I had processed your loss, and comprehended a world without you in it,
On the tears came. And I can't believe you're gone. It's
Entirely surreal that someone who was such a huge
Part of my life, my childhood, could just be gone.
Although we'd drifted apart, I always thought we'd speak again someday.
Last year I'd refer to you in passing and it wouldn't make me cry- but now it's
Useless trying to hold back the tears as it would only render me numb.
More than anything, I wish that I'd swallowed my pride, and said hi when we
passed
But hindsight is a fine thing, that no one can hope to possess at the time.
On the years will go. But I will never be whole again, now that my first ever
friend has gone.

F R Wills

Lovely

Lovely, that's what she seems.
But truly, that's all dreams.
She tries, of that she's sure,
But at empathy she's poor.
Patronise you, she will not.
But just in case you forgot.
Lovely, is what she seems.
Will she fall for you in her dreams?
That's not the question you must ask.
Instead tell her you'll forgive her past.

F R Wills

Lyca:

Loving losers lost Lyca's life.
Life lost losers loving Lyca.
Rain rose ruefully round Rosie.
Rosie reigned ruefully round Rose.
Loving losers ruefully lost Lyca's Rose,
while wilful women whined and won.

F R Wills

Make Me Whole:

There are pimples on my arms that flare up in the heat.
I have two scars next to my left eye,
a large mole on my neck,
bags under my eyes and many open pores.

I have astigmatism, wonky glasses,
love handles and cellulite.
My fingers are double jointed,
and my ankles are weak.

I have veiny forearms and asymmetrical cheeks.
And don't get me started on my giant nose.

My eyes are often bloodshot, and I cannot wink.
My feet are ugly,
and my toes are hooked and crooked

I have a big bum and small boobs.
The 2000s would hate me.
I can't wear trousers well
except skinny jeans.

I'm 5 foot ten and counting
and have the hands of a man.
I've been told I'm androgynous
And I don't like to tan.

My hair is naturally a dull mousy brown
and I have to pluck my facial hair.
Does this scare you?
Why should I care?

I do not shave my legs and I refuse to wear stilettos.
I've stopped wearing makeup everyday, and I don't go to the gym.
I don't eat pudding, but rest assured I eat my fill.

I stopped overeating when it made me physically sick;
A legacy of social eating from my childhood.
I had thought that eating was a battle to see who could eat the most.

But then I almost choked and could not eat for a while.
I lost weight then. I felt great then. I'd already started
to suck in my chest to look more like them. My skinny peers.

But then I grew up; had a growth spurt and went through puberty.
My round belly turned to curvy hips and I felt truly pretty.
Before then the best I'd got was 'you're not pretty but you're not ugly'. Praise
indeed.

I used to detox to attempt to make it go away
The food I ate countered by a pint of peppermint tea.

I forgot lunch or breakfast in favour of putting on my face.
Neither of these lifestyles were healthy. I know now but this was my reality.

I donated my hair and then saw all my imperfections accentuated again.
Then I guess I let it go.

I got unfit and overate and I didn't care a bit.
Until I did and then I even tried out corsets
And secret meal supplements for lunches.

I made unhealthy choices but then I discovered endorphins
And it all changed.

Beauty is being healthy, I realised that then.
But we have so much further to go.
There is still so much pain.

Because girls are taught that
Beauty is about a weighing scale and
A label in a dress. And it is, I guess.

I cut off all my hair, distressed about my life.
It changed the way people saw me.
More than it really should.

I have longer hair now
and plan to donate it again.
I have a healthy lifestyle
and I don't plan to relapse again.

But I still think of it too much
The desire to be like them.
I still pinch my thighs
and feel ashamed of my biceps.

But.

Beauty should be healthy
And about loving who you are.
Beauty shouldn't be a concept
Best seen from afar.

So, if you love a woman,
Don't say: you look perfect.
Instead say you are beautiful
Because of who you are.

Your looks may fade
But I will always see
The beauty in your soul.

And with everything that you do.
You help to make me whole.
Please help to make me whole.

F R Wills

Mapping My Life:

If my life were to be mapped,
The church would have to figure.
And a book store full of dusty
paperback volumes of the classics
And modern novels alike.
My family would sculpt the contours,
My friends the mountains.
My anger would spark volcanoes,
Perhaps my tears would fill the oceans.
But you would be the focal point, the cathedral.
In the map of my life,
You would be the only landmark.

F R Wills

Mary Magdeline

They called her concubine,
But on gold she would dine.
She loved every one,
Of those who used her for fun.

She had no choice,
Without that dress, she'd no voice.
So she picks up the dregs,
Of satin stocking legs.

Recalls loves gone by,
as each part will surely die.
She writes them all down,
The tales of her youth.

Once presented as truth.
Not marred by folly,
on the lips of the holy.
He forgives me it all;

So I know I will fall.
His friends condemn me as whore.
But like never before,
I am absolved of the pain.

In his eyes, redeemed again.

F R Wills

Municipal Screaming

I sit at my father's workbench
Elbows propped up on the wood,
I can see the frown lines that crease his face,
He has always seemed to look this way.

What does my future hold?
A life in the dingy workshop,
I will never prosper,
Never achieve my dreams.
They promised us equality, and this is what we got?
A life of misery, devoid of hope,
Whatever happened to progress, prospects
We have nothing.

I have nothing,
The anger burns inside me,
The hatred boils behind my brown eyes,
This must stop.

Municipal screaming,
Trapped inside us all,
Waiting to come out.
Waiting, but not forever...

I will never escape,
From this prison they call equality,
From this hell they deem perfection,
But some day- one of us will.
Municipal screaming,
Trapped inside us all,
Waiting to come out
Biding its time

F R Wills

Not That It Ever Is

Plastic rice- lead to bulk up bread,
It's all the same story; it's all poverty.
The "general maximum" of France; modern day food banks,
All I know is history, but I can use my empathy.

The risky days- I chose not to eat, worried about the size of my thighs.
So ungrateful- when there's some without a choice.
I once developed an eating disorder
-not that kind- it's just that I physically could not swallow.
I guess I can use that to understand-feeling empty
Losing weight-great.
But lightheaded- hair limp and greasy
Faded vision- legs giving way.

Not like my mate on Ramadan, not a fast like Lent.
But necessity- so empty.
She stares at me; cheeks sunken.
She looks like a supermodel; but she'll die soon.

She'll die if we don't help, it's not a choice.
Not fashion, hobbies, or juice cleanse.
Not that it ever is-she cannot breathe, her stomach swells.
And now we'll hear the mourning bells.

Except she doesn't have to starve- find some coins-
She's someone's daughter- we're all the same.
Just find it in you, don't refrain.
Help a girl who's just like me to eat again.

F R Wills

Occur:

A green clay pot and a watch or a water bottle caked in dust;
I felt utterly devoid of desire and lust- empty. Then
I met her. Which is as cliched as my heart skipping a beat,
which it did. Apologies if you don't appreciate my conceit-
I'm not trying to be conceitful or deceitful. I was trying to
swear off romance until I had a job. Then I met her. Or she
because there wasn't just one woman. It was understanding
that I was capable of wanting that connection, all aspects-
even the need to compromise, to give up my free time for her.
And yes that scared me but for the first time, those feelings did occur.

F R Wills

Of Course It Is

A tea bag bleeding brown into hot water and a fake Rolex watch on my bedside table.
The vitamin supplements scattered across the floor.
Books, bras, bin bags and bronzer thrown together in a pile in the corner and my answer phone flashing red with your message.
It's not that I don't love you anymore...
I'd cut you off right there.
A mouldering cup of coffee and a stack of unopened bills had sat on his table when I'd walked into that place again.
The first time since.
She called me a slut and I threw the mug into the sink.
Her little black dress had been spattered with its rancid contents.
Retribution of a sort.
Your comb and hair gel hold the fort on my bathroom shelf.
Even the floorboards miss your slightly lopsided tread and retain your footprints on their grain.
It isn't that we should break up...
I'd thrown up in the toilet at that part.
Mourning sickness? Maybe it was just the shock.
It's just that I'm already married.
As though it would explain everything. The flood of lies.
I've missed my period and the test came back positive.
Is it mine?
You lead two lives so why shouldn't I have done the same? But yes. Of course it is.

F R Wills

On Your Doorstep

The heather whistled in the wind
The waterfall crashed over the rocks
The sound of children's voices rang
The flag flew in the soft wind

The cottage stood strong
Windows thrown open in welcome
A thin trail of smoke rose from the chimney
The roses climbed the walls

Girls ran in the meadow
Daisy chains around their necks
White cotton skirts flowing
Bare feet wet with dew

A regiment came to the town
They mentioned a war
They called it the Great War
They said they needed help

They called for men to fight
No one came
They asked again
No one came

They went back to their homes
Never thinking of it again
That was until they came
With their loaded guns

Boots trampled the mud
The mud is all that is left
The grass decimated by tanks
The river bed stands dry

The flag is trodden into the mud
Only a hint of blue can be seen
The meadow is a barren battle field
The Daisies all are gone

The cottage stands in ruin
It's walls burnt to the ground
The only faint memory
A singed rose petal

They'd called for men to fight
No one came
They'd asked again
No one came

F R Wills

Photographs As Personality

I've been told
He'd bounce me
on his knee

Laughing and talking
But not understanding
A word
Or so he'd said

I wished for so long
That I would remember
That I saw photographs
As personality

But I never knew
Him, I never saw him
First year of school
And he was gone.

I was just a toddler
How could I have
Remembered? And yet
I hate her for forgetting

For letting those
Moments slip through
Her tiny mind
Thinking Grandad would

Always be there
I grew so numb
That I'd forgotten
The tears as I stood

At the gravestone
Getting the water,
Freezing cold
As it splashed back

At me
But I was numb
Not with cold
Then I cried

Because I had
Nothing. To look
Back on
No way of grieving

I guess I'd never
Noticed the hole
In my life
Then I was bringing

In the washing
Carefully, removing
Each peg
And I realised

That he'd chosen
The house just for
The garden.
I looked over at the swings

That I played on
As a child
Or the wood
We'd burned in the

Garden, lugging branches
In lopsided wheelbarrows
Over hopscotch stones
In uncut grass and the willow tree

That was cut each time.
The shuttlecock
Got stuck in it
In a badminton game, once

He played badminton
We'd been throwing stones

With the rackets
In lake Windermere

And the glare I'd got
That's when I knew
How great a man
He must have been

I came in from
The garden
With its daisies
That hid nettles

And said
I should have
Known him
He should have

Been a part of my life
Birthdays
Christmas
Everything he's missed

And I never even
Got to speak to him
Barely met him
And my mum

She just nodded
And I felt
For the first time
The gap in my life

I've been told
He'd bounce me
on his knee

Laughing and talking
But not understanding
A word
Or so he'd said

I wished for so long
That I would remember
That I saw photographs
As personality

F R Wills

Pretty Looks:

I can see the light, and everything is clear.

She was never mine, so I have nothing to fear.

Loving her rendered me numb,

Like damp, sodden washing-

Just hanging from a line.

But now that the spirit

Has penetrated my system,

And liquor is coating my teeth,

Tongue and lips.

I can finally say that I'm leaving it behind me,

This duvet of memories that

I'm trapped beneath-

Suffocated.

I'm intoxicated

But I've never felt more alert.

I know that a lover

Isn't someone to desert

Nor someone to hurt.

Apologies if this hurts you.

I truly don't want to.

You can call me bitch behind closed doors

Or even to my face. This will change nothing.

I'll still cherish your face, and hair

And worship the memory, the ghost of you.

Because I can't just forget somebody who taught me to love.

I will try to forget you, but heaven's above.

You're the one.

I can't move on.

So, come on.

Don' t lead me on, just so someone will still miss you,

When your pretty looks have gone.

F R Wills

Provide Me Shade

Dead leaves fall to the floor,
She is bare. Born again in spring,
She knows it. But she won't wait,
Until then- fall. Free falling.
Into a sleep, salvaging freedom
Of the past- at once calm and frenzied.
The forest rests, completed by the symbiotic
melody of the forest's songs.
She's not alone any longer,
She's a part of something so much stronger.
The forest glade will provide her shade,
and when the bashful sun begins to fade.
She will come home.

F R Wills

Remind Me Of You:

Ocean waves of music.
A scarlet text message.
A little blue dress.
Rags of dreams.
Splintered china fantasies.
Remind me of you.

F R Wills

Restricted:

Someone once said save your sins for silent sorrow
Someone once said find your faults and fix the feelings
Someone once said run from wrong and renounce wrongdoings
Someone once said sing your song like your song's worth singing
No one said they'd treat me differently
No one said this was a closed group, restricted
No one said that I'd be turned away, on my fucking wedding day
just because I'm the one of the flock who gladly turned out to be gay.

F R Wills

Rolling Ocean Waves:

Isolation,
some would say
Is blissful,
like rolling ocean waves.

But when you are the boat,
With white sails stretching
To the sky.
You only want to dock.

In a familiar harbour,
or secret cove.
To be surrounded by,
sandy beaches or pebbles.

For trees to shade you,
From sunrays.
That would fade,
Your paintwork.

All you want is a forest,
To be among those
You were stolen from.
Not rolling on ocean waves.

Because that is bliss,
In a familiar harbour.
Surrounded by friends,
far from rolling ocean waves.

F R Wills

Ruth And Naomi:

The sun sets on our love-intreat me not
to stay while stars appear above- to leave thee
is what I must do now- or to return-
you must allow- from following
my meaning that I am tired- after thee for
you said it was what you desired- wither
you not when you hear my stance- thou goest
but I will follow you, perchance- I will go

F R Wills

Seas Of Silence

Nothing

You can hear nothing
Nothing but the blood
Pumping through your ears

And the slow drumbeat
That is your pulse
You become acutely aware
Of everything around you

Every creak, every footstep
Is amplified
So that it fills you
Echoing through your senses

Your eyes are sealed shut
And it's as if the world
Has closed in on you
Is orbiting around you

And it's cold
Silence - is cold
Like a vacuum
And there is nothing

And you are nothing
In the darkness-
Just a body
Curled up into a ball

Silence filling you
Up to the head
With nothing
With everything

Because silence
Just accentuates
Every other sense
And you can feel the world

As it spins around you
It never makes a sound
But in the slow drumbeat
Of the blood in your veins

There is a noise
And it's so quiet
But compared to the silence
It's a symphony

There is nothing more beautiful
Than the sound of the blood
Pumping through you -
It sounds like the ocean

Someone once told me you can hear the sea
In conch shells
But it's the blood

Rushing through your ears
It sounds like waves
Swooshing around
Filling your senses

Tides of silence
Wash over you
And the undertow
Drags you into space

And you are alone
With your thoughts
And the silence
And your heartbeat

'Wake up' they say
And you float
On seas of silence
Back to sound

F R Wills

Speciation Is Cyclical

Just as surface area increases and
So the surface area to volume ratio
Increases. I feel the heat flow
Out of me when I see your eyes

They say natural selection could
Explain your eyes. Perhaps some
Ancestor we share had eyes
That did not resemble our own

These would have prevented
This ancient's ability to get
What he needed- mates,
Food, territory. Out competed

And dead. Survival of the fittest.
And yet, no science can explain
The heavy yet light feeling
That fills my stomach when I see you.

Just as animals who live in harsh
Conditions have thicker skin
I have gained one due to the
Pain they have caused me

Body fat they need makes me feel
Ugly. Not insulation, but lack of
Exercise. My insulating coat is
My parka. My camouflage is contouring

To hide from the predators. Or the prey?
Or maybe I'm more like the desert cacti
Spikes to stop water loss through
Transpiration or tears?

Stops the predators. My body
Can't store the water that spills
Over my eyelids somehow,
When I am sad but is just excess

The only extensive root system that I have
Is my family, not bringing water
Sometimes helping retain, otherwise
The reason for it's spilling.

Perhaps I've become adapted
For a specific feature of my life
Are the walls I have built my thorns?
My shy glances away nothing

Like the warning symbols or
The poison of the natural
World. No, I warn them away
With my words or lack of them.

There was no lichen
To warn of the level
Of pollution in our love
I needed to have a living

Indicator of your sulphur
Dioxide lies. Invertebrate
Animals were not there
When you kissed me with

Your eyes open. Testing for
oxygen level even as I gasped
For breath. Or perhaps it was the
Non living indicators - temperature

Of your skin against mine. The
oxygen level between our lips
The rainfall of our tears muddying
Our love. Evolving romance between

Us turned to nothing. Survival of the
Fittest. I know that genes gave us
The varied characteristics, but science
Got it right when it mutated to form

The humans we are. Completely

Different in species to our simpler
Ancestors. Natural selection
Because of variation and

Competition. Just as I competed
For your attention and craved
Your varied smiles. Darwin.
Rapid changes that occurred

Due to our change of environment.
Mutated but still perfect. Separated
So we both varied to different environments
Eventually through natural selection

We grew too distant, too changed
Different species now. Even if we met
Our love would only come to nothing
- a barren love that could bring nothing.

If only I could have fossilised
The look in your eyes
But love is soft and doesn't
Preserve well. Weathering

From another girl's lips. Not
Even the claws and bones of
The arguments remain, they've
Been replaced by the minerals

Of the mascara that runs down
My face as I let myself cry.
Not even a rootless trace
Or a footprint of our love remains.

Destroyed by the geological activity
Or was it the chemistry between you
That made you forget our history?
But maybe that's how life developed

Betraying the past for the sake of
The future. A future with her. Not me.
Our love is gone now. Lost. Passion

Had long been extinguished. Extinct.

Changes over geographical time
Or her eyes, distance between us.
Survival of the fittest. Doubt spread
Like a disease with no vaccination.

Love couldn't survive the new predator.
She was a more successful predator
A catastrophic event, I could not call it
And yet, ever so slowly, I lost you

Our love died. It was no volcanic
Eruption. There was no asteroid.
Only her. Only you and I but not
Us, separated. Speciation is

Cyclical. Two populations -
Separated. A divide between our
Love. Not only empty sheets. But
A mountain range, a river.

Genetic variation and the
Natural selection that I could
Not win through competition.
Alleles favoured her and not me

Nature selected her for you.
Now we couldn't love successfully
We have become far too different.
Almost different species. Extinct.

F R Wills

The Soldier's Heart

The feel of mud under my feet
Still takes me back there.
To the screaming, sirens
And the earth shaking throbbing.

Of my heart.

You see all that I could focus on,
Against the brown of the battle field-
were his eyes.
His blue eyes were a beacon.

It seems insane that I'd fall
in love in the midst of a battle.
But they were all I could live for;
His bright blue eyes.

And I think it was them,
That I saw- closed finally.
On the beige, muddied stretcher.
But I'm still searching for him.

I see him grow old without me.
So I stopped caring.
I threw myself on that mine;
and now I see him.

He's married, got kids.
But he takes out my
Photograph- and weeps.
That's when I hold him,

In my transparent arms,
Kiss him again.
My boy with the blue eyes.
And the soldier's heart.

Too Caught Up In Her To Know It:

Loving you was terrifying to me,
I think that I'm scared of committing to
Anyone who makes me feel I am loved,
Lest I begin to base my life on you.
It bloody scares me if I tell the truth,
To know that you once pondered on my eyes.
That you saw in me something to adore,
I'd never felt close to this way before.
You made me feel my heart was going to break,
I've built such walls, but you could knock them down.
So I made up every excuse I could,
To force all of my real feelings back down.
The truth is you were my very first love,
But I was too caught up in her to know it.

F R Wills

Turquoise Ocean Depths

Water floods your senses
And you float off into dreams
The feeling of it- smooth against skin
Lulls you to sleep and you slip away

Waves roll over you
As you lie there
Hair flowing like seaweed
Behind you - drifting with the current

You dive down
And feel the sandy seabed
Your ears pop and your eyes sting
But you must stay under

Flashes of red and silver
Swim into your vision
and sea shells
Brush your feet

The constant fear of
The deeper blue
And creatures
With sharp teeth and fins

But you still swim out
Not knowing whether
You want to
Reach the cliffs

Or touch the horizon
But you keep swimming
Feeling the tension
As you push through heavy water

And as you
Come up for air
The sting of the sun
and salt is glorious

And you feel
Like a mermaid or siren
In the turquoise
Ocean depths

Waves roll over you
As you lie there
Hair flowing like seaweed
Behind you- drifting with the current

Water floods your senses
And you float off into dreams
The feeling of it - smooth against skin
Lulls you to sleep and you slip away

Not knowing whether you want to
Reach the cliffs or touch the horizon

F R Wills

Whenever You Fall:

Our culture emphasises sexual freedom.
There's a lack of exclusivity and a fear
Of the word love. But that's not healthy.

If you can feel love, which not everyone can
You shouldn't stunt it out of fear
That your heart will be broken. It will anyway.

Lovers come and go but you should always
Be able to remember the heart racing,
Skin tingling excitement of the fall.

If all you have at the end of it all,
Are a string of hook-ups and heartless
Text exchanges. No photographs,
No feelings. Then what was it all for?

In the past, there was a restriction on
Love. It was seen as something frivolous
And not something to pursue. But the
Human mind cannot be chained to that
So- people had mistresses, lovers,
Ran away with the footman.

Because love doesn't stay quiet
For long. But our society glorifies
Celebrity romances and yet
Promotes a work life that
Won't allow for love.

Love is seen as fleeting,
A honeymoon stage and then
You settle into domestic life.

Love shouldn't be boring,
Although now familiar.
Love shouldn't be cautious
And held back, commitment phobic.

What is the point of a label
A ring, a home and a family
If it is not grounded in a
Beautiful and precious love?

I'm asking. I'm asking
Because I had to fight my
Own demons to even
Get to this stage and now
I'm supposed to be
Casual.

When my entire
Life has been a lead up
To the first time I truly
Felt another's soul
Collide with mine
In perfect harmony.

People say that love is dead,
But it's not killed by clichés.
Instead it's the cynics who find it
All so nauseating because they think it shameful.
They call real love co-dependent. As all they feel is liking.

If you miss someone when they're gone,
It's called caring. And it's what love is.
I think we all need a healthy dose of hope
And idealism before we fall into a pit of
Settling for less than perfection.

Love takes work so own that,
And don't run to the hills at the first hurdle.
Once you grow up, you'll know that
Distance wasn't the problem but weak love.

Any love that fades, didn't burn bright enough to start with.
In an equal love, there should be no need to forgive.
A love based on looks is not a love at all.
So be careful, but also hopeful, whenever you fall.

Where I'd Never Lived Before:

It had been overwhelming, the door as a barrier, a barricade
Between me and the sea of new faces. I'm an introvert-
prefer small groups. School was easier as it was classes,
tutor groups, choir and orchestra. Then theatre companies
and writers group and even volunteering. But this was new
and although I'd been at UEA and made friends there- a
summer school felt different to the real, immersed experience.

Flu, or just a bad cold really and not being able to sing
like I had back home- at the top of my lungs
except at choir but even then, it was restricted.
Writing, of an evening but missing the squash and
biscuits and Christchurch from back home.

Sitting in lectures and suddenly feeling empty
because I'd never be back there again; at
Ilkley Grammar School. It's not that I wanted to
retake exams-no. But the teachers, the hallways-
my friends. I missed it all. I didn't think I'd miss

so much about Ilkley or being somewhere where
the majority can pronounce scone correctly.
The Language Lecture touched on the supper, dinner
conflict but we all call it 'tea'. It's as if I'm all at sea

But I'm not far from the shore. There's land ahoy
and I'm beginning to rediscover joy. It will take
time and I will never learn not to miss Ilkley Moor.
But I'm learning to love a place where I'd never lived before.

F R Wills

Whom The Queen Adores:

The corset's bones dug into her abdomen as she sentenced him to death,
Her favourite- the courtier that she had loved and lost, she had to do it.
He had to die. But she remembered the tokens, the kisses and flowers.
Courtly love, no more. But not less either. She couldn't bear it. So she focused

On the bones of her corset. Did this make her no better than her father?
Sentencing a lover scorned for a supposed betrayal, an unfounded accusation.
And now she had lost two she loved to the power of the royal sentence to death.
So she focused on her corset and her furs and her lead clogged pores.

This was commonplace. This was the way. Better to have lost him than have him
betray her and mock her. He was a traitor. But she would never love another
man, he was the only man for her. Don't pity, All was not lost for the red haired
empress! To lose the only man you loved is not to lose love entirely. And

Lust? She had never felt it for the man. Was it worth sharing her power for a
mere emotional bond? Feelings flutter and then fly away. Why should she give it
up for him? Or any he at all? But her lady in waiting, with the spun gold hair and
lips as red as the sky at night when the shepherds have means to rejoice.

She

Would be worth risking it all. So she took her into her life, and she kissed sweet
kisses across her brow, but never her lips. She stopped at the lips. Knowing that
she would break apart and let her soul be consumed, if she so much as brushed
those rubies. She focuses on her corset, and her lead clogged pores.

For it is sinful. Whom the Queen adores.

F R Wills

Why And How?

You make my heart beat quite out of my chest.
It is a fact that my words are cliché.
But the truth is you're better than the rest.
I can't express it any other way.
Your hair is as rich as fresh brewed coffee.
Intelligence flows in your every word.
Not that these things all matter to me.
Not loving you now seems to be absurd.
There have been others who have made me smile,
And some who caused tears to run down my cheeks.
But I think that I have loved you for a while,
A matter of months and not merely weeks.
I can't really pursue these things right now,
But I'll never forget the why and how.

F R Wills