

Poetry Series

**Paula Puddephatt**  
**- poems -**

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## Paula Puddephatt(06/11/73)

I write mainly 'survivors' poetry', and currently live in Basingstoke, UK, with my husband and pet birds.

# A Certain Stillness

At the very centre of our silence,  
I listen to the orchestra of angels,  
and a certain stillness seems to  
enter, deep inside of me.

Paula Puddephatt

# A Reason

The truth is in the after-glow.

Is there a reason?

I don't really know.

And, should the sun neglect to rise,

how do we carry on?

Yes, I see through their petty lies -

and, yes, it hurts so much.

There is no apparent reason.

I cannot touch

the edges of - no, must not go there.

Is there a reason?

I don't know, but I know that

I simply can't not care.

Paula Puddephatt

# All Night

my thoughts and emotions  
all night all night  
I toss them around  
all night all night  
I toss along with them  
all night all night  
my thoughts and emotions  
all night all night  
but soon I shall fall asleep  
soon I might

Paula Puddephatt

# All Over Again

I felt real again  
briefly  
in touch and part of this world  
when optimism dropped in  
on me

I thought that I was  
coming back to life  
that someone had  
switched me back on  
at the mains

but these emotions  
of deep sorrow  
they don't go away  
they simply lie dormant  
and then they can catch me  
off guard  
overwhelm me  
all over again

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# Almost Safe

Almost safe inside my sanctuary -  
it's not that I'm afraid of solitude.  
Yes, there is loneliness, but why delude  
myself? In my heart, I must stay wary.

People will hurt you once your guard is down.  
Hurt upon hurt - it gets hard to repair.  
Still, I find that, in the end, I do care.  
With no lifebelt, I fear that I might drown.

I just don't know the answers anymore -  
as if I ever did. Does anyone?  
Select a star to make a wish upon.  
Remember not to double-lock the door.

I thought that I'd be safe here but I'm not.  
I sense the final chapters in 'their' plot.

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## Alternative Cv

I've tried to earn a living. What a joke.  
Had fewer breaks because I would not smoke.  
I've typed too many lists of licence plates,  
And been in a few paralytic states.

I've tried to operate a fax machine.  
I have become addicted to caffeine.  
I've pretended not to hear a phone  
At five to five; I know I'm not alone.

I have been very bored, and felt depressed.  
I fear that you may not be too impressed  
By my honesty. That is just too bad.  
This poem may not please my mum and dad.

I have been stressed out over a deadline.  
I have known that I really shouldn't whine -  
But still ended up moaning, anyway.  
I've felt sick just looking at my In-tray.

Paula Puddephatt



# Always

emotions  
stretch like lycra  
across the span of years  
decades

dreams sparkle  
softly silvering  
my conscious mind

gentleness  
compassion  
hope  
peace  
love  
be with me  
stay with me  
always

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# Analysis

I think it through  
analyse  
then analyse the analysis  
dissecting remembered conversations  
in my mind  
fragments of  
half-forgotten conversations  
searching  
for hidden meanings  
double meanings  
searching for words  
that I could  
have said  
instead  
of the ones that I did  
or the ones that I did not  
regretting the silences  
that should have been  
filled with words  
the words  
that should  
have been silences  
or different words  
wishing that I  
could write  
alternative scripts  
with fresh dialogue  
wishing that the  
real conversations  
could have been  
drafts

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# And That Is All

Not even as good at anger anymore  
Thoughts of vengeance  
Convert the hurts  
Into more complex hurts  
And that is all  
So would I still be seventeen  
Or twenty-two  
Or twenty-seven  
Whatever, wherever  
No  
But all is know is now  
What hurts  
Simply hurts  
And hurts a lot  
And that is all

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# Another Boring Poem

I run out of dull "updates"  
for Facebook and Twitter –  
so I write boring poems, like this one, instead.  
Yes, you already know that I suffer from migraines –  
and that, prior to noon,  
I can't always get out of bed.

I should wait until I have something to say:  
something fresh, new and very upbeat.  
If I wait for that moment,  
it may never arrive.  
If I wait to feel hungry,  
then I just won't eat.

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# Artificial

Take me, break me -  
artificial life.

Sincerity, in reality,  
seems too much  
to hope for.

Shake me up, break me up -  
my artificial life.

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# Autumn

Leaves turn to gold, bronze, copper, burgundy.  
It still feels warm, but sometimes there's a chill  
In the evening air. We wait until  
The leaves begin to tumble from the trees.  
What we feel now is more like wind than breeze,  
And we anticipate the winter's freeze.

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# Before I

before I return the childhood memories  
to their dusty  
attic box  
maybe I will write my  
initials in the dust  
just to let you know  
PP woz ere

before I close the classroom  
door once more  
close not slam the door  
this time around  
since I am an adult now  
and have no need anymore  
for slamming doors

but before I leave the  
distant past  
behind this time  
I shall take one final backward glance  
take a moment  
to light a candle  
in my mind  
for two old friends  
both of whom were  
gone too soon

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# Bouquet Of Multi-Coloured Roses

Multi-coloured swirls of petals  
remind me of the reason why  
life is nearly always  
a bed of thorns.

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# But I Don'T

I fear abandonment

So much that I can't function

I want to believe

That anyone could like me

But I don't

My heart won't

I fear abandonment

So much that I can't function

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# Calm

post-storm  
calm  
has settled  
here  
within my  
shattering heart  
my dust-covered  
dreams  
finally  
dead  
the pain  
unending  
excruciating  
and yet  
suddenly  
calm  
so calm

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# Cancelled

can't hoop jump  
today  
don't have very much  
to say  
and anyway  
and anyway  
the day is cancelled

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# Carousel

around and around  
on the carousel  
spinning  
around and around  
merry-go-round  
multi-coloured dreams  
vibrant darkness  
the colours of confusion  
around and around  
the endless circles  
cycles  
horses longing for  
the wild  
longing to run  
far away  
leave this fairground ride  
of psychedelic craziness  
behind  
to feel their manes caressing the wind  
their spirits embracing the speed  
the freedom  
around and around  
endless cycles  
on the carousel of dreams

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# Cash Machines In Walls

The seasons still revolve.  
Night melts into sunrise.  
We endlessly evolve.  
Truth punctures lies.

We gaze towards the light:  
A faith that is restored.  
The dark is also right.  
Our rich reward

Comes in all shades and hues.  
All is from the same Source.  
We search so hard for clues.  
They're here, of course –

But maybe not where we're  
Expecting them to be.  
One day the fog might clear  
Enough to see.

Religions are access  
Points – cash machines in walls.  
It's so hard to assess,  
And all those rules

Make it so difficult  
For many to conform.  
The emphasis on "fault"  
Makes us feel torn –

Inadequate, at best.  
We try to understand.  
Sometimes we need to rest,  
Heads safe in sand.

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# Colours Of Pain

magenta stains  
upon jet-black

soothed by amethyst skies  
lilac dreams

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# Consequences

each conversation  
is a game of consequences  
at each point  
at which I could have said  
A, B or C  
what would have happened  
how  
would the direction  
of the conversation  
have altered  
had I only  
made a different selection

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# Dark

almost intoxicated by  
harsh, dark  
emotions

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# Depression

I scrape my motivation off the floor –  
Pretend that I can face another day.  
I might appear to go on as before,  
But am not really here. What can I say?

It's self-indulgent to write poetry  
Like this, so I try not to, but I fail.  
I realise that this is "Me, me, me".  
Who are these other people who all sail

Through life? They have problems, too. I know that.  
Start with compassion. That's what Buddha said.  
What conclusion am I to arrive at?  
Who knows? Must drag myself out of this bed

Each day, and it is getting very hard to.  
I guess that it is just the same for you.

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## Destination: Lower Than Low

when you think  
that you have hit  
rock bottom

just keep on falling  
falling  
falling

until you reach  
your destination

the land of amplified screams  
that place of ultimate darkness

welcome to  
my world

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# Disappointing Daughter

Meet their disappointing daughter,  
with her disappointing ways.  
They would oh-so-love to humour her,  
but it really never pays.  
What's wrong with that girl, anyway?  
She's always in a daze.  
Why won't she join in with their games?  
Her brother always plays.  
It's not that they're ashamed of her -  
but some of her displays -  
and, let's face it, in public, too...  
Such a disappointing daughter:  
imperfect;  
human;  
got drunk when younger;  
went out with a few dodgy blokes,  
when younger -  
such a disappointing daughter,  
with her disappointing - unforgivably  
disappointing - ways.

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# Disappointment

Disappointment:  
that's where I am at.  
It seeps into  
the fabric  
of my day.  
It seems that sorrow  
is definitely  
here  
to stay.

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# Distant

distant gaze

golden haze  
of emotions

too many days  
lost  
walking around  
in a daze

so many vague notions  
distant

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# Dolphins

Aerodynamic angels  
Of the ocean  
Whose graceful motion  
Entrances and enchants

Your collective spirit  
Swimming  
With my own  
In sacred waters

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# Dreaming In Neon

dreaming in neon  
beneath star-filled skies  
of indigo velvet

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# Dreams

collage of dreams  
memories framed  
in mahogany

silent symphony  
of vibrant darkness

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# Duck Haiku

floating undisturbed  
upon the tranquil waters:  
bread, declined by ducks

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# Feeding The Ducks

Slice of bread hits duck,

Who looks at us,

As if to say:

“Please stop chucking your

Stale bread at me.

I've already eaten.”

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# Feels Like The End

I hold the pain inside.  
It breaks my heart and mind  
and will not be denied,  
diluted or defined

by words, which don't suffice.  
My end is drawing near.  
They're tightening the vice,  
and everything I fear

is starting to come true.  
I am dying on a cold, damp concrete floor -  
and no-one seems to have a clue  
how to help me anymore.

The truth is that I'm broken now,  
and cannot be repaired.  
They're not too bothered, anyhow.  
One final meeting must be chaired,

before we're into closing scenes:  
theme tune; credits roll.  
Those images on movie screens:  
selected method for thought control.

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# For Rhiannon

oh beloved Rhiannon  
know the rhythm  
of my jaded heart

as sapphire skies  
dissolve into ebony  
and stars dance

and I stare  
almost trance-like  
at the near-full moon  
and she is you

and you  
cradle a baby  
your baby boy  
your son, Rhiannon

Rhiannon, beloved Rhiannon  
understand me

hear me  
heal me  
teach me  
love me  
save me  
I am going crazy

and your humility  
humbles me  
and your spirit  
astounds me

and tonight I pray to you  
beautiful goddess  
I pray to you

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# Framed

each tear is framed  
forever

as I drown in these black  
oceans of despair

no sign of hope  
anywhere

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# Given Choice

validated  
given choice  
so-called 'choice'  
in the form of  
too-confusing menu options  
sub-menu options  
Choice A  
Choice B  
choice scream scream scream  
given choice  
locate your voice  
vacate your place  
empty space  
too late now  
but you were  
definitely  
given choice

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# Ice Cream Vans

music  
from local ice cream vans  
can soon sound sinister  
not sweet

once such music comes to represent  
in all its corny oh-so-sweetness  
aspects of a childhood

turned suddenly so dark  
not sweet  
not like ice cream

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# If I Believe

If I believe  
in the beautiful lies,  
I am deluded -

but if I accept  
harsh, hopeless,  
dark  
truths,  
I am cynical.

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# If Only

if only I could  
fade away  
dissolve

not have to face  
another  
pointless day  
as me

that's how I feel  
some days  
most days of late

existing  
not really living at all

wishing that I could  
simply  
fade away

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# Imperfect Expressions

you'll find me burning  
multi-coloured candles  
in my mind

immersed in moonlight

and desperately hoping  
that my  
words - straight from the heart -  
are heard

my imperfect expressions  
of devotion,  
Rhiannon

my persistent, passionate pleas  
for your  
divine blessings

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# In Every Breeze

immersed in these  
my memories  
I feel them here  
in every breeze  
and never really feel at ease  
a soul filled with pain  
that will  
never cease

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# Inside My Mind

enclosed  
inside my mind  
a terrified child  
still finding her way  
still learning  
hurting  
hoping  
seeking release  
finding her own ways  
to face a new day  
to embrace a new day  
seeking peace

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# Invasion

filth  
pure filth  
invades my environment

deceit  
pure lies  
invade my mind

insanity invades  
every aspect  
of my life

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# Jaded

She's jaded and nobody understands.

They're afraid to humour or indulge her.

She ought to take it into her own hands.

With each birthday, she is one year older,

With nothing more to show for it and so

She gets depressed - considers suicide.

Nobody could care less or wants to know

About her feelings. She just &quot;hasn't tried&quot;.

They bully her. That's the last thing she needs.

They all know better though, or think they do.

Can they distinguish wild flowers from weeds?

She won't push in. She's standing in the queue,

Just as instructed. She'll be there all night.

Their verdict: Stuff her. She should be all right.

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# Knock, Knock

We are not from Scottish Power,  
or even British Gas.  
We wouldn't drag you  
out of the shower  
for anything less than  
God. And just to let you know  
how to achieve Eternal Life...

We are nothing like  
the religious group  
who called on you last night.  
There is one major difference:  
They are wrong, and we are right.

Certain substances must be avoided  
like heroin and cups of tea.  
Is it worthwhile mainlining –  
or enjoying Typhoo or PG –  
if, because of that, you cannot live  
with God eternally?

You can stuff your face with chocolate, crisps –  
and Diet Coke is not outlawed.  
You can even have some Red Bull  
to wash down all that chocolate,  
if you're getting very bored.

You need to be baptised, and soon.  
Your last one doesn't count:  
insufficient water, and you were too young.  
What about the Baptist Church?  
You're being awkward now.  
Okay, let's cut straight to the chase.  
No other church has authority  
from God. We do.

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# Late Autumn Into Winter

last leaves clinging to  
your branches and I feel like  
just like one of them

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# Lime Trees

Summers consist of  
peridot mornings,  
and emerald afternoons.  
The trees filter the sunlight -  
so often saving me from  
those headaches, which might have  
mutated, evolved into migraines.

By autumn, the leaves have changed colour:  
a poet's palette of  
amber, copper,  
gold, and red.

In winter, the trees are slender,  
with a stark, grey-brown beauty:  
looking fragile,  
yet able to endure  
the harsh frosts of the season.

And, throughout the seasons,  
'they' plot.  
They want  
a concrete universe -  
so they mark out their potential  
victims, with orange spots.

The letters to local residents are headed:  
'Implementation of  
Environmental Improvements'.

Yet, trees can bleed.  
Scenes of carnage seal the deal.  
They win; we lose.  
So much wildlife, instantly evicted.

Fluorescent yellow workmen circle tree stumps,  
inspecting their day's work -  
before going for 'a pint',  
and home for tea.

Spring is cancelled.

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# Liquid Gold

where do they go  
these emotions  
that flow  
the liquid gold  
of tears  
that flow  
a soul  
my soul  
that overflows  
where do they go  
where will they lead  
these emotions  
raw emotions

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# Loose Ends

loose ends  
those stray threads that  
snag  
on every sharp edge

why is my life

so full of them

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# Magnolia

drifting  
lucid dreaming  
magnolia morning  
awaits  
bleeding ruby tears

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# Maybe Baby Pink

I think in  
pastel pink  
for my baby maybe  
for my maybe baby  
for my nearly daughter  
for every little thing  
that I almost  
nearly  
taught her  
I feel my pain in  
pastel pink  
waves of  
subtle  
anguish  
for my baby girl  
for my spirit daughter

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# Memories

The happy memories  
make me cry the most.

Such memories are often  
obscured  
by the shadows  
of sad recollections,  
which outnumber  
and constantly surround them.  
They never leave me.

Yet, it's strangely comforting  
to realise  
that the happy memories  
have more power,  
and that these will always  
make me cry the most.

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# Moon Goddess

As indigo skies dissolve  
Into jet-black,  
Her silver shimmer  
Gently answers  
Passionate prayers.

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# Moonlight Reflected

The lake of pure lust

has frozen tonight.

Moonlight is reflected in ice.

In tentative baby steps,

her inner infant

is re-learning

to trust.

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# My Words

words  
my words  
take them  
take  
aspects of my soul  
the pain  
the gain  
the going insane  
a few random words overheard  
take them  
or leave them  
my poems  
my blog posts  
my words  
dark words  
vibrant ones  
those that reveal  
parts of me  
that you never knew  
existed  
misunderstand them  
hate them  
resent them  
love them  
crave them  
refuse and reject them  
dissect them  
respect them or not  
they are words  
only words  
and maybe they will never  
be enough  
but they are  
something  
and they are mine  
so I offer them  
offer and share  
these words  
that you read

or these words  
that you don't

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# Neon

neon screams  
in dark  
corridors

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# Neon And Rainbows

rain slashes  
through emerald trees:  
a summer's day  
duly converted  
into greyscale perfection

Quaker-grey thought patterns  
secretly flirt with  
neon  
and rainbows  
screaming in our  
sacred  
so-called  
'silences'  
none of which  
necessarily  
mark out  
or in any way indicate  
meditative moments  
or spiritual quietude

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# Never Was Enough

the so-called 'friends'  
the so-called 'family'

this life full of lies  
whether black, white or grey  
and those lies by omission - the cruel, cunning variety

never was enough  
to rip the carpet from  
beneath my feet  
so this time they are taking  
the floorboards  
as well

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# New Start

how do I feel  
really feel  
about a new start  
healing my spirit  
piecing together the shards of my heart

even though inside I am falling apart  
lost  
tossed aside

my dreams  
I want to give them away  
every one  
to the highest bidder  
lowest bidder  
any random bidder

I would like to throw them  
item by item  
from an apartment window  
let the wind take them  
let the wind carry this pain  
away

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# Not In God's Name

Protestant, Catholic, Mormon, Jew –  
I understand your point of view.  
If you can't mine – well, that's a shame.  
No "holy" war is in God's name.

Islam means "peace". We all want that.  
Meet the Quakers. Be friends and chat.  
Buddhist, Hindu – we're all the same.  
No "holy" war is in God's name.

Jehovah's Witness to a Sikh:  
Sisters and brothers, let us speak.  
It's not a case of placing blame.  
No "holy" war is in God's name.

"An ye harm none, do as ye will."  
The Wiccan Rede, we must fulfill.  
Let peace on Earth become our aim.  
No "holy" war is in God's name.

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# Not Mine

my dark recollections  
extensive selection  
buried  
but why

to hide their shame  
not mine

rewind  
review  
history redefined

remain true  
at all times  
to myself

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# Not Spring For Me

No crocus or no daffodil  
is ever fooling me.  
There may be fresh leaves  
upon the trees,  
dancing in the fragrant breeze,  
outside my window,  
challenging my reality.

It's winter, still, inside my heart and mind.  
Dark days and nights are here to stay,  
eternally.

There will never be another  
spring for me.

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# Nothing Mends

The slamming shut of dreams;  
The darkness that descends;  
I'm finding no new themes,  
And nothing mends.

What's broken stays that way.  
I don't have peace of mind.  
The silver in my grey  
Is redefined,

And redefined again.  
The cycle just repeats.  
Keep scrubbing the same stain:  
All life's defeats.

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# Numbers

You would love to put me on trial.  
Meanwhile,  
my mind is full of words,  
and in-yer-face neon signs,  
and pale moonlight,  
illuminating my  
private night sky.

Numbers - digits -  
they leave my imagination numb -  
which probably explains  
my grade F in Maths,  
blending as much as contrasting  
with straight As in English -  
Language and Literature, both.

I am not the number  
scrawled upon the file  
that you pretend not to keep on me.

Stop ringing. Facebook me - or Tweet me, if you must.  
My soul is telephone phobic,  
and ex-directory,  
and I have taken the receiver off the hook already.

I really don't want to bin  
this pile of Falmer jeans.  
Yes, they represent a previous decade's styles.  
And no, they probably wouldn't  
fit me, anyway.

Talk to me  
and not the number  
on my file.

Even if the dial on your scales  
won't stop in time,  
I might still be worthwhile.

I visited The Wizard of OZ,  
and he told me  
that Victoria B. is really  
no thinner than me.  
She simply owns clothes  
in smaller sizes,  
into which she can fit with ease.  
That's why they invented  
stores such as Marks and Spencer,  
and 'vanity sizing'  
to fit your wildest dreams.

It's not about make-up.  
It's not about glamour.  
It's not about attendance at church.  
And it's definitely not about  
the results of my Maths GCSE.

Don't attempt to quantify me.

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# Obstacle Course

Every day is an obstacle course

For me to try - but fail - to navigate.

I'm weighed down by my feelings of remorse.

No-one's expecting to negotiate

Or budge an inch. They want it all their way.

To me, that is unfair. I say as much,

Which does not go down well. I will not play

Their games, though. I don't know why there is such

An emphasis on who is right or wrong.

We've lost the grey tones in the black-and-white.

They'll hear the instruments, but miss the song.

The lyrics matter, too: Let's get that right.

Another cup of tea would go down well.

I'm still that school kid, waiting for the bell.

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# One Flower

all but one  
of the bouquet  
of flowers  
have drooped  
heads bowed

one remains  
stands proud  
solitary  
still seeking the light

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# Orange

the tinge  
the singe  
the orange syringe  
of  
not full rhyme

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# Pastel Shades

Hope sometimes comes to us  
in pastel shades.  
It isn't always  
either  
black or white,  
or even grey.  
I feel that hope,  
when needed most,  
will often be  
revealed in  
pastel shades.

Paula Puddephatt

## Plan B

she offered me  
a plan B  
didn't recognise the complexities  
of why  
it could never work for me  
could not really understand  
why  
her plan B  
simply made me want to scream

but why  
why  
did I have to deny  
that she was  
going  
to die  
and I couldn't even  
wouldn't even cry

now left with fragments  
a parrot painting  
squirrel fridge magnet  
books  
memories  
and a friend's plan B  
that still won't work for me

Paula Puddephatt

# Psychedelic Giraffes

Psychedelic giraffes  
stroll past  
our windows  
daily,  
and 'Borrowers'  
still reside  
up in the loft.  
My Size Eights  
clothe the folk  
in Narnia.  
Oh yes, and did I tell you  
about  
the giraffes?

Paula Puddephatt

# Psychedelic Skies

see through their  
translucent lies

soul cries  
heart still denies

now realise

visualise  
psychedelic skies

Paula Puddephatt

# Pure

initially  
there is something pure  
about the raw emotions  
something sacred in those tears

fast forward  
another year  
another  
another

enduring  
day after day  
hurting  
is pure agony

Paula Puddephatt

# Quaker Plain

She wears a bonnet to the pub,  
on the grounds that she's now "Quaker Plain".  
She turns more heads than anyone else:  
is considered harmless, sweet -  
but quite insane.

So many girls choose low-cut tops.  
The local lads find her attire  
more sexy than some mini-skirt.  
So much for "modest dressing" – if such  
was ever truly her desire.

Paula Puddephatt

# Quakers On Pacifism

It is not "P. C." to be anti-war,  
Or to refuse to stuff one's face with meat.  
Quakers are not pacifists anymore

By definition. It's not like before.  
These things are individual. We can cheat.  
It is not "P. C." to be anti-war.

We cannot break an invisible law.  
We rubbed it out, you see. I should repeat:  
Quakers are not pacifists anymore.

Some are. Some aren't. There's nothing we stand for.  
We can have bacon, toast or Shredded Wheat.  
It is not "P. C." to be anti-war –

To be vegetarian, vegan or  
In any way, restrict what one may eat.  
Quakers are not pacifists anymore.

This, Friends, is the conclusion we must draw –  
Won't vote on this; we might just face defeat:  
It is not "P. C." to be anti-war.  
Quakers are not pacifists anymore.

Paula Puddephatt

# Raven Black

tonight  
a woman's  
raven black tears  
falling  
falling  
falling

Paula Puddephatt



# Relentless

can I just admit that  
sometimes  
I don't know what to say  
where to start  
or how to face  
another day

sometimes I can only lie  
in bed  
for far too long  
listening  
to the relentless rhythm  
of the rain  
as I avoid another day

can't begin to heal  
or find a way  
to wash away  
the pain

thoughts and emotions  
so relentless and repetitive  
cascading

and I still don't know where to start  
or what to say

Paula Puddephatt

# Resigned

Poetic inspiration glistening  
On the horizon of a troubled mind -  
She shuts it out. She is not listening.  
In her state of depression, she's resigned

To being uninspired. Darkness descends.  
She doesn't want to pretend there is hope  
When there is none. She doesn't trust her friends -  
And family is worse. She cannot cope

And just can't see a future anymore.  
Each day is a fresh battle to survive  
And she knows that she'll never win the war.  
She's lost her motivation and sex drive.

Her monthly hemorrhage is nearly due.  
She wishes for an early menopause.  
Sure, she'd have loved a baby - women do -  
But God is good at small-print, and a clause

Was slipped into her contract from the start.  
The NHS just watch her fall apart.

Paula Puddephatt

# Retreat

I shall return to my bed  
stay out of life's way  
be quietly irrelevant  
make everyone's day

block my path  
shut me out  
whatever

it can only hurt so much  
and hurt in just about every way

so I shall retreat to my  
sanctuary  
return to my  
cell  
go away  
far away

and leave you all alone

Paula Puddephatt

# Revealed

subtle shades  
of pain  
and grief

her spirit  
screaming  
silently

tender truths  
reveal themselves  
in dreams  
only ever in dreams

Paula Puddephatt

# Sample Kyrielle

I need to demonstrate a skill.

None of my poems fit the bill.

I'll write a new one. What the hell.

I need another kyrielle.

I must not mention politics

Or religion. I'm in a fix.

A sonnet - that's all very well.

I need another kyrielle

I can't go on about my weight,

Be negative, or full of hate.

Won't settle for a villanelle.

I need another kyrielle.

I mustn't moan about the shrinks,

Or point out that the "system" stinks.

The truth remains, but I won't tell.

Just need another kyrielle.

Won't criticise my CPN.

Oh dear, I must put down my pen.

Must write a new one. What the hell.

I need another kyrielle.

Paula Puddephatt

# Sanity And Paperwork

This is the path I walk but did not choose.  
I feel my pain in different shades and hues.  
Still seeking a new substance to abuse.

My sanity, like paperwork, I lose.  
Feel judged by smug church people in their pews,  
who can't see past their narrow-minded views.

I'm over-sensitive. You touch – I bruise.  
This is the path I walk but did not choose.  
Both sanity and paperwork, I regularly lose.

Paula Puddephatt

# Scarlet

scarlet the droplets  
an arm begins to bleed  
to steadily bleed  
like the soul  
of someone in pain  
of someone in pain  
day after excruciating day

bleeding scarlet tears  
my eyes  
and now the skies too  
bleed their scarlet raindrops  
the tears of the gods  
in pain  
such pain  
day after day

Paula Puddephatt



# Self-Harm

a vibrant tattoo  
each cut and each bruise  
silent screams  
externalised

Paula Puddephatt

# Sellotape And Glue

We recite the same words every Sunday.  
We all "know that The Church is true".  
There is no doctrine on the Goddess,  
"The Qu'ran" – or any other view.

You have to read "The Book of Mormon" -  
pray until you "know it's true".  
But how does that prove that nothing else is?  
Sellotape sticks, yet is not glue.

Paula Puddephatt

# Sepia

precious memories  
moments valued treasured  
sacred  
sepia-toned

framed forever  
here  
in my heart and mind

Paula Puddephatt

# Silent Screams

just because my screams  
are silent that does not mean  
that I'm not screaming

Paula Puddephatt

# So Judge Me

I hardly ever leave the house these days.  
The past few years, to me, are just a haze.  
I cannot find my way out of this maze,  
And have no more constructive points to raise.

I feel the tension building up inside.  
It looks to you as if I haven't tried,  
Which is untrue. I have never denied  
That I have made mistakes. I have not lied –

Not to you, and not even to myself.  
It's not a choice to struggle with my health.

Paula Puddephatt

# So Much Better When

What if I cannot find a place for me?  
To be a burden: Why would I want that?  
If I let go, that's no-one's victory.  
I just feel desperate: That's where I am at.  
It's hard for anyone to understand.  
It's not as if I truly would have planned

to chuck my life away - be childless -  
with no career, either. No prospects.  
Each aspect of my life is in a mess.  
The psychiatric system just protects  
the ones 'they' see as valuable - of use.  
I'm battered by a lifetime of abuse.

This is how it seems on my darkest days.  
I pray and meditate. A sense of peace  
returns to me once more, but never stays.  
I wish that I could steam-iron every crease  
inside my mind. I might feel better then -  
or maybe I'll feel so much better when...

Paula Puddephatt

# So Near

Am I still here  
Am I still near to  
But not there yet  
Residing in the deep, dark hollow of  
Sadness  
Oh such sadness  
Hovering on the edge  
The edge  
The window ledge  
Knife's so sweet, enticing edge  
Edge of this  
Potential madness  
Why still here  
Yet so near  
So near

Paula Puddephatt

# So Quietly

so quietly  
she cries  
herself to sleep  
again

hot  
metallic tears  
that burn  
sting  
steadily  
descend

Paula Puddephatt



# Sometimes You'Re Everywhere

Sometimes I just feel you there,  
on rain-drenched afternoons -  
or later, in the cooling night air.

Sometimes you're everywhere.

Sunlight, trees, butterflies:  
All remind me of you -

and I come to realise -  
but part of me still denies...

but somehow I know  
that you're still here - there - everywhere.

Paula Puddephatt

# Spiral Staircase In Sepia

That spiral staircase -  
which I visualise now in sepia tones:  
Where does it lead?  
Where did it start?  
Spiralling, spiralling -  
out of control -  
the unanswered questions,  
and unquestioned answers -  
and the tick-tock  
of 3am,  
and a mind exploding,  
dreams shattering,  
exhausted,  
unsleeping.

Paula Puddephatt

# Spirit Of The Unicorn

The spirit of the unicorn

is rising in my mind.

My guiding light, in celestial white:

equine angels, offering comfort and insight.

Paula Puddephatt

# Spiritual Peace

I find my place of spiritual peace  
Again, just when I feel I never will.  
There is a sense of freedom and release.  
I can't know all the answers, but am still

In touch with The Divine, and that is real.  
We're all connected. Life is precious, and  
Life doesn't end with death. Sometimes we feel  
A presence, and we come to understand

That nobody who's ever been has gone.  
The spirits of those who we've loved remain.  
They will protect us – help us to go on.  
There is almost a beauty in the pain.

Although sometimes I find it hard to trust,  
Truth's constant. Feel the patterns in the rust.

Paula Puddephatt

# Star

so in control  
or seemingly so  
a ballerina  
executing  
another perfect  
pirouette  
perfected through  
repeated practice  
flawless  
like her  
still baby-soft skin

no-one apparently noticing  
that those hollow cheekbones  
are tear-stained  
again

blonde anorexic  
so young  
too young  
sweet and glamorous

another falling angel  
and crying  
again

her true beauty  
her essence  
she hides  
inside  
her secret inner space  
where she is herself  
authentic  
perfect in her very imperfection  
a star

Paula Puddephatt

# Sunlight

Let the subtle  
sunlit phrases  
glide into my mind:  
sorrow redefined.

Paula Puddephatt

# Sunlit Moments And Enduring Faith

sunlit moments  
of pure love and compassion  
captured forever  
in the memory of the heart and soul  
a reason  
to believe

Paula Puddephatt

# Tesco Clubcard

Human contact.  
Someone said to me  
yesterday:  
'Have you got a Tesco Clubcard?  
£6.20 please.  
Cheers.'  
That might not be  
word-perfect,  
but whatever -  
you get the gist.

Now I can live on that 'conversation'  
for the next few days,  
or so...

Paula Puddephatt



# The Healing Process

gentle chords  
a broken spirit  
mending

healing hearts  
unite  
in love so pure

Paula Puddephatt

# The Highest Perch

You'll meet few vegetarians at church.  
Humanity must have the highest perch.  
Christmas without dead turkey would be odd.  
Thou shalt kill for a pie from Sweeney Todd.

Want Biblical proof? We can grant your wish:  
Jesus fed the five thousand with dead fish.  
Let's empty every ocean of its cod.  
Thou shalt kill for a pie from Sweeney Todd.

"All Things Bright and Beautiful", they're singing.  
I enjoy the sound of church bells ringing,  
But what have churches got to do with God –  
When thou shalt kill for a pie from Sweeney Todd?

Paula Puddephatt

# The 'Own Life' Exclusion Clause

all of my life  
I've been assured  
that so-and-so  
this person that person  
has his or her 'own life'  
subtle exclusion clause  
meaning that some 'friend'  
or family member  
no longer wants to know  
that you are not a part  
of his or her 'own life' anymore  
if you ever were  
and that the person no longer  
wishes to know  
about yours

Paula Puddephatt

# The Truth From The Lies

decide not to hide  
anymore  
try to divide  
the truth from the lies  
hear the silence  
that still resides  
deep down inside  
know her colours  
feel her rhythm  
let her slide  
into the corners  
of your conscious mind  
play pause play again  
fast forward rewind  
stop eject  
reality redefined

Paula Puddephatt

# To Pay The Rent

So do I think that Sylvia was brave,

Selfish - or was she just out of her tree?

Don't save me when there's no-one left to save.

All I need is somebody to hear me.

So is it fair for people to blame Ted?

Why judge the lives of those whom we've not met?

What did Mind ever mean by "user-led"?

Why bother putting poems on the Net

Or writing them at all? I'm killing time,

But aren't we all? It feels as though we are.

I'm always searching for another rhyme.

He drives me crazy with his damn guitar.

We've got a coalition government -

Still no income with which to pay the rent.

Paula Puddephatt

# Trust

Trust, so pure -  
it can be broken -  
shattered.

Words that cause deep hurt  
can be forgiven, but - once said -  
such words can never be  
unspoken.

The threads that hold  
us together  
in this life  
are as fragile  
as they are precious,  
and irreplaceable.

Trust, so pure -  
it can be broken  
in a moment,  
having taken weeks, months,  
years,  
or a lifetime,  
to form.

Paula Puddephatt

# Truth And Love So Pure

and so  
discover innocence  
simplicity  
once more  
honesty  
and love so pure  
know the truth  
again  
truth so pure  
eternal  
universal love

Paula Puddephatt



# Trying To Escape

if I stuff my head full  
of poetry  
song lyrics  
Tweets  
and my friends' Facebook  
status updates  
favourite paragraphs from favourite novels  
lines remembered from movies

will my own thoughts  
my own emotions  
eventually  
dissolve  
into the vast ocean  
of ideas  
of thoughts and emotions

or will my mind  
simply explode

Paula Puddephatt

# Twigs And Leaves

Each tree has  
so many branches, twigs and leaves,  
each of which is a true  
religion, denomination,  
spiritual path.  
And there is a whole  
forest out there,  
full of twigs and leaves,  
each of which correctly insists:  
'I lead back to The Source -  
the tree's very roots.'  
True -  
yet too many twigs and leaves  
still claim to be  
'the only way'...

Paula Puddephatt

# Unspoken

haunted

broken

so many  
too many  
words remain  
unspoken

Paula Puddephatt

## Who Is 'Everybody', Anyway?

They're told to watch X-factor, so they do.  
They're atheists who married in a church.  
They almost, nearly have a point of view,  
And read the Daily Mirror, just like you.  
Nine in Ten are like them, says our research.

She does the vacuum cleaning every day.  
They'll have their second kid by thirty-five.  
Ibiza is their favourite place to stay.  
They buy and sell possessions on ebay.  
They get drunk to remember they're alive,

Or maybe to forget. Well, they work hard,  
So who could claim they haven't earned the right  
To boozy Friday nights – in which they've starred  
Since teenage years which left them battle-scarred?  
They've savings, but will tell you "money's tight".

They went to Glastonbury for a laugh  
Two years ago. Now they can say they've been.  
He'll always drink a pint, and she a half.  
He likes to wave his Man United scarf.  
She "does the gym" to keep her body lean.

They music now – don't buy CDs.  
They like the bands that it is cool to like.  
Her skirts do very nearly reach her knees.  
She can still wear a Ten – but not with ease.  
The Union tells him when to go on strike.

She must apply make-up before she can  
Put out the wheelie bins. She has her pride.  
They have their mortgage, and their Five-Year Plan.  
She's in the garden, topping up her tan.  
He likes his dead pig breakfast, duly fried.

Paula Puddephatt

# Why Can'T We?

Why can't we all just get along?

Why can't we all be friends?

I heard the line &quot;Thou shalt not kill&quot; -

not, &quot;Oh well, it depends...&quot;

I'm sick of funding pointless wars

until this country's broke,

and can't afford an NHS

that works. What kind of joke

is this supposed to be, and must

we blow The Planet up to

test out which, if any,

religious text is true?

Paula Puddephatt

## Words Like

thoughts  
more tears

words like  
resolution  
closure

tears  
more thoughts

will this pain  
ever end

Paula Puddephatt