

A Length Of Silk

I ache to lie once more
against her neck, savour
the seductive fragrances
that clung to my threads. Isadora...
even her name pirouettes...
all movement, sound and scent:
a firework of a woman.

So proud, I was – her trademark scarf
of finest mulberry silk and legendary length –
her favourite always. When we danced
we were air and light, fluid as water, melding
with music, with her wild laughter

turned on a breath to a visceral crack
and a strangled screech that will haunt
me forever. Dragged from the open car
in a grotesque parody of a back somersault
she slumped on the cobblestones,
limp as wilted blossom, my cobwebbed ends
shrouding her face, her soufflé spirit choked
and snuffed the moment I was pulled taut
and knew myself for a killer.

Innocence

(After Robert Hayden)

There was one crumpet left. We fought
over it, my brother and I, until my mother
picked it up and threw it on the fire.
It crackled with echoes of her blazing voice,
'Serve you right, serve you right.'

For despite *the chronic angers of that house*,
what did we know of her fears
of losing Dad to the surgeon's knife?

We could know nothing then
of man and wife bonds, forged
beneath sheets and the gruelling spaces
between pay packets.

THE PK POETS

The PK Poets is a series of free to print poetry leaflets
highlighting the poetry of a single poet. It is intended to
be a sample introduction to the work of a poet.

The Poetry Kit is a free online resource for poets listing
competitions, events, open floor events, online and print
magazines. <https://www.poetrykit.org/>

For information about the PK List a free critique list
<https://www.poetrykit.org/pkl/index.htm>

ABOUT CORINNE LAWRENCE

the South Manchester area of the UK. A specialist
teacher of Speech and Drama for over thirty years,
Corinne started writing seriously in 2010. Her first
placing was as a runner-up in a Writers' Forum monthly
competition and subsequently her work appeared on the
Visual Verse website.

Since then Corinne has had poems published by Indigo
Dreams Publishing in Reach Poetry, and also in 'For The
Silent' - an anthology published in 2019 in conjunction
with The League Against Cruel Sports.

Several of Corinne's poems have been reviewed Writers'
Forum and Writing Magazine, and she has won, and
been placed or short listed in a number of competitions in
both of these publications.

Copies of this poetry leaflet can be downloaded and
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For further details, to make comment, or to contact
the poet or the publisher please email;
info@poetrykit.org

THE PK POETS

SECOND SERIES

#15 Corinne Lawrence



One Ton Camp

Antarctic winds tore through his heart,
as at the bleak South Pole,
the flag of Norway taunted him:
Scott knew he'd missed his goal.

Now Scott and his despondent band
must trudge back to their base.
Eight hundred miles to *One Ton Camp*,
a trek they have to face

with ceaseless, blinding summer light
suspending night and day:
a footslog through the whiteout storms
along that endless way.

Four hundred miles to *One Ton Camp*:
though almost halfway there,
the backup team abandon them –
no thought to how they'd fare.

Eleven miles to *One Ton Camp*
more raging blizzards blew,
and trapped within their flimsy tent
they saw they'd not come through.

'The odds are stacked against us now,'
breathed Oates, in numbing pain,
'I'm going out ... I'll be some time...'
his meaning all too plain.

That final camp became a tomb
their reputations sealed:
Scott's epitaph, 'to strive, to seek,
to find and not to yield.'

Morning Tanka

Singing through the dark,
robins' red bibs and tuckers
brighten winter days:
disturbing Sunday

snoozes, squabbling sparrows scrap –
suburban unrest.

Not Only, But Also

Not only is this a poem about homemade soup,
Hasselback potatoes, and toffee roulade,
it's also about laughter between friends
and the shared communion of bread and wine.

It is a poem about PPE: of face masks, visors,
and two pairs of latex gloves. It is about
the courage of going down unknown roads,
carrying your cross into Covid wards.

It is a poem about sun lounger snoozes
in peaceful backwaters, but it's also about
a warlike Chinook in the wrong place and time
turning tranquillity to chaos, harmony to conflict.

Above all, it is a poem about mug shot portraits
in cramped corridors, of bricks outliving lives,
and of standing, horrified into silence,
in the claustrophobic gas chamber,
so it also has to be about the moment
a malevolent German chose to go down
the road of murderous manhood.

The Lace Maker

She did not speak. I could not meet her eye –
sought, instead, the profusion of her work,
each piece a symbol of an age of hate:
a wordless reprimand I would not shirk.

But yet so alien to this English town
of vicarage teas beneath a Christian spire.
I thought – what do I know of yellow stars
or life and death played out behind barbed wire?

Evening Tanka

Living the high life:
risk taking swifts speed circle
round nature's fairground:
blackbird bravura –

dawn fanfares become laments
to departing day.

Falling In Love Again

He stood
rooted
to the spot,
longing desperately
to let
 loose
 the tight
 curls,
bury
 his face
 in the promised cascade
 of her hair.
What was it, he wondered,
about 18th Century women,
with their pursed smiles
 and enigmatic eyes,
flaunting
 tantalising tastes
of voluptuous
 flesh right in your face,
inviting
his hands to wander,
 unrestrained,
where they would,
through rivers
 of streaming silk,
beneath cultivated acres
 of satin, or under
 broad fields of brocade.
How he longed to lift
the lissom lace,
press his lips
to her alabaster arms,
kiss the fingers
 of her refined,
white hands,
 delicate
 as fragile porcelain –
to be used but rarely, then put away
for safety, against another time.