

A blade by Brian Boake

**An interesting wager it might be
To punters viewing me cursed
With recalcitrant tongue, and too-large feet
Which would stumble first?**

**Urges of lust I could take in hand
Though short-lived was my joy
I somehow grew a hankering for love
And knew I was no longer a boy**

**Did I have a profile with her?
More likely a spectre – invisible
I had to try, despite the risk
Of cutting remarks rendering me risible**

**I'd sooner have paid, in early life
To wipe the blood, than seize the knife**

A Garden Villanelle

Without the din of idle chatter
In the garden where I walk
Out ring truths that truly matter

Throbbing leaves and windly smatter
These, what pull my heartstring's bell
Without the din of idle chatter.

The beat of life is birdly patter
In my ears and in my knowing
Out ring truths that truly matter.

How soon might streets and towers scatter
All I gained in Eden's peace
Without the din of idle chatter.

Like breaking glass one voice could shatter
That still and easy settling place where
Out ring truths that truly matter.

The best of friends agree in whisper
Walking in my garden's world
Without the din of idle chatter
Out ring truths that truly matter.

Dorita Peer

A River of Words-about the river of life

The sun diary reflects mournful death

Birds without rhythms signal decay

the warmth that claps Innocuous rhythms

set the pace and gallops from a street.

Stolen from semi-precious stones

Pottery flowers and sparrow heads litter.

Empty harkening,

time's fool overturning shells,

the nubile balance tipped

Twilight when sand darkness

counts the chimes

And sways and whines like a thief

no timepiece purchase can be made

We are done.

Written by Anna Manna-Santarossa

(A river of words while listening to poet Barbara Guest.)

A Winter Pantoum

In the winter's frosty temp, I resist

The urge to frolic in the cold

Without my jacket, I insist

On many layers of fine rolled fur

The urge to frolic in the cold

Is driven by the sparkling light

On many layers of fine rolled fur

That warms with significant delight

Is driven by the sparkling light

Nature's teeming life abounds

That warms with significant delight

around the snowy crusty mounds

Nature's teeming life abounds

Without my jacket, I insist

Around the snowy crusty mounds

In winter's frosty temp, I resist

Written by Anna Manna-Santarossa

Centó Number Two

I gave them to you
Nothing's missing, and nothing's left over

Poorly the light of the lupins burns
Lying right there on the first page

You can die once, twice, even seven times
And what is empty turns its face to us

For more thorough acquaintance came
The strains of grave lectures granted interviews

And so, after having served Art
All things distant
what is near is dim at the sun, and says I am.

Written by Anna Manna-Santarossa

Childless by Ruth Patterson

(after *Walking Home*, by Marie Howe)

No way I'm having children

he said, out of left field.

You're not even twenty yet,

I fielded back,

seeing my grandchildren

playing in the yard.

Don't you read the news? He did,

and scrolled it endlessly on screen.

He said, who'd want a kid in this mess?

I do, I did, I have, I said

and held hope for the world—

I still do.

COLOUR

by Joanne Bailey

Lights illuminate,

Lights cast shadows,

Lights brighten dark places,

But if there were no lights,

The glorious morning sun would illumine our path of the day

Imagine the radiant sun of the early morning,

A sunrise of colours to waken the world,

Yellow, orange, and red spanning a distance across the sky,

And, as the day continues a sunset follows in the evening,

We marvel at those colours, the blues and purples,

We gaze, walk and appreciate these sunrises and sunsets as we ponder our thoughts of the day that is about to end,

Soon, tomorrow be here and another unknown colour creation will waken and end the day with more resplendent thoughts.

The colours we have seen are vivid and intense creating endless emotions and feelings.

“Don’t cry for me, melania” by Brian Boake

Through all my years I’ve never heard
The tocsin bell sound louder
Bloodshed stains Europe once again
Cannons claim babes as fodder

Yet U.S. conservatives (cons for short)
Cheerlead for the Impaler’s war
See, Orange Creep owes a pile of dough
To Russian thugs – and wants still more

So shameful minions pollute air waves
And justify the slaughter
“To keep the Donald out of debt
We’re doin’ what we ought `er”

“Our boss’s needs Trump all else
The oligarchs won’t let go
Last time he paid them back in crypto
But now they demand Tru-deau”

For me, I cry “Please please good folks
And all with half a brain
There ain’t no point in Biden our time
We’ve got to help Ukraine”

What little I know is here summed up:
The right is always wrong
All of them should Putin for retirement
And let sane folks get along

LEFT UP TO HIM

At the beginning six groups of four gathered
A whistle blew and 3 from each scattered.
Each to his lane
Hopes of victory to gain.
Devoted cheers as each country was named
To the victor would come fortune and fame.
The three positioned around the track
To the starter they looked over and back.
An eerie hush engulfed the crowd; the command draw out runners S..E..T.
Leaning ever so slightly, vying for any advantage you could get.
Then the explosion of the starter's gun
Was instantly drowned out by yells and shouts Run Run Run.
The lead run flew.
It was made, the tight exchange of One to Two.
The second runner; of long stride
Simply blew by.
Reaching with all his might
Exchange Two to Three just right.
Baton frozen in hand of Three; he stretched the lead.
The four in the anchor lane judged his receiving speed.
It seemed three increased his pace.
His was the best leg of the race.
Easy, slow, slow, within the boundaries of the exchange lane.
In that enclosed moment, the strained voice of Three yelled:" Lefty go go!"
Heading for home
Arms and legs in blinding form.
Baton in right hand...not so.
The baton it was time to take.
from Right hand to his name sake.
Slip of the fingers, a feeble grasp.
The baton fell off his knee and rolled pass.
Four stumbled and gasped.
No Hero's welcome back home.
Malone felt all alone.
Suitcase packed, it's time to leave town.
The cab arrived late, road construction, delay turn left go all the way around.
At the Bus terminal newspapers laid about.
Those who didn't know soon found out.
His face pictured on the sports page under which was written,
"George LEFTY Malone; Olympic medal dashed by this Fella"
Head down, his shame hidden,
He just wanted to get out of there.
"Your bus already LEFT", the ticket master declared.
Suitcase in hand in found one seat LEFT against the drafty entry door,
Passengers scurried by and many kicked his suitcase on the dirty floor.
The LEFT latch was ripped off.
Sorry, sorry, then face to face .. It's him, it's him they'd scoff.
And so began the curse of Lefty Malone.

Lipogram to April...no vowel but "l".

Spring mist dips
In risky vivid light.

Mighty fir's first sight
Is Finch's twisting flight.

Iris lips spill bliss;
Ivy climbs high.

Rich winning dish
Is dirt's striking gift.

Singing in mirth,
Spring's birth thrills.

Teresa Veltman

Motherhood

Mighty Mother Maple

Nurtures her Spring blossoms.

She uses her allies of sunlight and air

To nourish the developing buds.

As the baby leaves unfurl,

She admires the immature green.

The samaras mature, cultivated by love

Filled with potential.

Time to surrender them to the wind.

The helicopters whirl long distances,

Spiraling in the air until they land.

Mother Maple observes their journey

With a mix of sadness and hope,

Relinquishing their future to

Variables of soil, sun and water.

Teresa Veltman

Nature Symphony

Sunlight enhances the contrast of light and shade

The poplar leaves take turns dancing;

First this one, then that one.

Half the leaves conspire in the shadows

While the other half frolic in the light.

A crystal path sparkles across the bay

Its outline teases and entices as it shrinks and swells

The brilliance of the light giggling

Interrupted occasionally by a passing cloud

The sonorous "harrumph" of the bull frog

Provides the bass for the chorus from the treetops

The high-pitched soprano of the sparrow and the alto of the chickadee

Combine to become the symphony of the forest

Teresa Veltman

North Star

Have I told you why I love poetry?
The breeze whispers your name
and it's my favourite song.
I breathe in the words
that soar straight into my heart.
Shivers down my spine
invoke the flutter of the butterflies,
I never knew I had.
You see,
my love, it doesn't judge
it doesn't fade as the days pass,
it doesn't get lost in the distance.
It doesn't dwindle with time.
It doesn't rise and doesn't set,
like Polaris.
It is constant,
holding its place
as the universe moves around it.
My love,
it does not shake.
It radiates from my heart to yours.
It is simple and pure,
like poetry massages the heart,
like you are my North Star.

By **Noha Nasri**

Member of WriteNow@King, former Nobleton resident

Sabra by Brian Boake

**A pomegranate looks less a fruit
And more like a failed apple
Yet once we dig past its asperous skin
There are seeds within – so tasteful!**

**Lo: a tangelo, aptly yclept ugli
Though this one's seeds are no treat
Surprise is reaped when we slice to its core
And discover extravagant sweetmeat**

**Here I stand, rough to the touch
A mien most underwhelming
Inside my face a stumbletongue – yet know
I didn't show up for a fling**

**You alone, through alchemy of your touch
Can discover the fruit – we'll harvest so much**

Sea stars see stars

Do the starfish in the night
see the scattered stars?
Through all the layers of this this life,
reaching up past ours?

Through the seas, the air, then space
the starfish stare above,
Is each one twinned, a second face
that beams back down in love?

The starfish in their private beach
move with gentle grace
The stars above, beyond our reach
are always keeping pace

Watch and see into the heart
There's nothing that keeps us apart
For at each centre near or far,
God has etched a shining star

By Hendrika Ono

Stiletto Song

Leopard Print upper and cherry red sole
Sing of femininity and
hint at a role.

Three-inch exclamation points
tap on the floor
Clip clop clip clop
There is power in store.

Contracted calves articulate the beat
Setting the tempo
Of allure and defeat

Steel rods triggered
Perform as weapons too.
Percussive and threatening
Is the rhythm of the shoe.

Crumpled feet and aching back
Are a dear price to pay
For sex appeal and influence
And to see the crowd sway

To the Stiletto Song.

Teresa Veltman

The Self

The ancient network is still here
We imagine it and use it to our advantage
And when dark restless clouds blow
Across our brow, we seek
Within ourselves the wisdom
To grow apparent and
Not act on our repeated gestures
Our story is no longer alone
It has become the norm.

Written by Anna Manna-Santarossa

While listening to John Ashbury, [A Wave](#)

The Trail Part Two

Hiking

Single file

On frozen track

You notice

Shadow trees

Black on white

Line the path

Whistle if you

need assistance

Chug on

Don't look

Back or

The terrain

will

railroad you

Poem written ala Nelson Ball
(Anna Manna-Santarossa)

Trees in a Forest

Steadfast companions

Higgledy-piggledy

Guard the grounds

Written by Anna Manna-Santarossa

In flowers and fields

I burrow and dilute my sorrow

in plain sight,

hoping the bee and

the swallow

carry the yields

away from my tomorrow

- *Lavinia Maria*

Untitled

Sarah walked away

And left Bill

Standing.

No words of admonition.

Fierce embers

From her glowing stick burned the fallen trail.

And Bill

Was

Left

Standing.

What caused such a colossal

Thunderstorm?

A dam was blocking the current

And no one

Moved a stick.

Harsh crackling from the fires

Within

Sent out their

Utterances of fury.

Bill

Stood

Alone.

As hollow trees despair

And

Currents continue

With no certainty

Of termination,

The north wind
Stirred up such a commotion
That
Mother Nature
Became the malicious
Meddler.
Sarah weathered by
Bill's devouring blaze
Extinguished the scorching coals.

By : Mary Jane McKeown-Olivo

What I meant to say by Brian Boake

My condition is called aphasia
And I suspect it's not a phase
The words I want seem out of reach
Boxed somewhere in my brain's haze

What's a synonym for "forgetfulness"?
Is it hidden in the hippocampus?
Despite the engagement of my cerebellum
It might as well be on the pampas

Where has the Treaty of Westphalia gone
Ere once it was close at hand
The end of the Thirty Years War is lost
Tucked under the pituitary gland

My faculties are fading; I've lost points of IQ
Though creativity remains, so I'll try haiku