

an untasted wine

shortlisted poems
from the written word
sonnet competition

A red circular logo containing the stylized white letters 'WW' in a cursive font.

WW

My Molly

My Molly comes on four legs to my bed,
At midnight, she hides something with her tongue.
My tapping fingers reach to hold her head,
She gives it willingly enough. It stung

A little in my hand, dead meat,
A beetle or perhaps a silenced bee,
A treat to hold but dangerous to eat.
She lifts a paw and taps my F1 key,

Amused at my predictable response.
The avatars flash deadly in their sims
Or dance and flirt like errant debutantes.
Befurred, so thinly wrapped in pseudonyms,

Don't lie, dog says, while closing velvet eyes,
But truth is not for everything that flies.

Ada Radius

Sonnet #1

Two lives entwined together evermore,
Exchange of solemn vow is made tonight;
The bells peal out from land to distant shore;
Now you've become my lover and my light.
The years pass on, our lives move like the tide,
The ebb and flow of moon and bright sun's grace
But moon and sun still find me by your side.
My hands in yours, enamoured of your face.
You stand near me as lover and as friend,
And as we greet life's end, we know we are
Prepared to go wherever God should send,
Heaven or Hell, I know you won't be far.
Our life and love, I know how it will be.
Tonight I dreamed this dream of you and me.

Torylynn Writer

North

The trip was north, the motorway the way
My parents and I took that bright September day.
I hadn't known exactly where it was
Until a map revealed that Yorkshire has

Bradford nestling in the West Riding.
"Famous for its curries", they said, after pausing:
Not famous for its Uni; that was hiding
Within an inner-city slum of pre-war housing.

The car gave up its cargo of boxes -
(Hutches for students, holes for foxes)
The Hall of two hundred: a crowd, yet seclusion;
My journey had reached its conclusion.

But the passing years have helped me comprehend:
That was only the beginning, not the end.

Reverend Wise

Untitled

Do not disgrace the love of two
Who have found their earthly souls
For the love of two - not me or you-
Is reward enough for the love they stole

Be glad for them, rejoice their day
Make joyous that they met
Do not scorn their choice bouquet
Or the reasons they may regret.

Love has no time or place it keeps
It wanders to and fro
It plucks those up who are asleep
And finds a destined beau

Be thankful then that they have wed
For it could be you upon their bed.

Coke Bernstein

Now

Let's check the inventory of our days.

We're told injustice and our trivial pain
Will be forgotten when we're born again.
Expectancy will help us to erase
The truth that Godot won't be here tonight.
So even if our freedom is the price,
Let's be content we're bound for paradise.
Our leaders tell us so. They must be right.

Wrong. Now is all there is, all we can know.
Forget the quaint hereafter and its prize.
The creeping twilight has no afterglow,
Behind it only blackness in the skies.
Tomorrow is a universe away
And we can never access yesterday.

Jack Lefebvre

Playground

Born free and wild, now his unquestioned slave.
With siblings she was captured and controlled.
Her master could be either knight or knave.
Without his love, life would be dark and cold.
He dresses her in green and white and blue,
then showers her with kisses from above,
though just a slave, to him she will be true,
now and forever he shall have her love.
But wait, see now the children in the yard,
they play about the staff with tethered ball,
'tis but a game, although they hit it hard,
the ball is captured, never can it fall.
Think back! The master and the slave have worth,
the staff our sun, the tethered ball this earth.

Sartor Indigo

Sonetto

Fosse il cuor suo tiranno di quel mio
ne spezzerei qual pane d'ogni mensa
ogni dì nuovo pezzo, che l'addio
mandasse a lungi nella landa immensa.

Fosse il cuor mio tiranno al suo desio
scioglierei le catene ch'arte pensa
onde il suo ardor vivesse in quell'oblio
del mondo, ove gli amanti non han scienza.

I cuor gettati all'uno e all'altro oggetto
come sgozzati agnelli stillan sangue
nei brani che cangiar fa lo stiletto
della poesia, che piano asciuga e languie.

Sinché stremi saremo nei labbri muti
a giacer sazi, l'un l'altra perduti.

Gordon Petrov

Sonnet

The deer nipped off the rose I put to grow
In soil you tilled, and under which you lie.
The flowers are here so everyone will know
I loved you. But I have to ask you why
He was cruelly left alone to rage and weep
At God. His madness goading him, he's fled
To bygone times of Austen, Bronte, Keats,
To gentle folk where every word that's said
Is kind. What promise made you leave your life,
To follow him in his reclusive way,
To keep your vows, a disillusioned wife?
Awake one dreadful night I heard you say
You planned to live your life once he was dead
Now he wants to die, but you went ahead.

Feargal Flanagan

Second Life Sonnet

I know not how or why the soul does search
for kindred hearts in lands it cannot see,
in mansions built by hands it cannot touch,
with aching hope to find that matching key.

But search it does, with dogged faith to find
that mirror'd part it needs to grace this earth
and sing the chords of common mirth and mind,
and bind what fate had broke apart at birth.

When such good luck does congregate this cast
and nature smiles upon these happy few,
they have the chance and liberty to last
beyond the life they once were forced to view.

The heart will ever crave to find its rest
and seek out those who comprehend it best.

Pat Hartono

Into Love's Light Beam

Your plaintive tears fall unstemmed from my eyes
My heart wears bloody bruises of your heart
My hand seeks to offer strength in it's grasp
I walk beside you though my step is shy
Your sorrow has no need to be asked why
Who, when, how or truly what is the source
It will in it's own time take it's due course
I cannot take it from you though I try
Kiss closed your eyes that you escape to dream
Whispering gift words to nourish your soul
Courage, strength, hope and faith offer healing
Hold up your face towards loves light and beam
Though now broken you will be again whole
Loving and giving, living and feeling

April Clapsaddle

My Lover's Eyes

My lover's eyes are still to me unseen,
Her skin untouched, her lips not kissed by mine.
Her secret passage ways the stuff of dreams
Her smell, her flavor, an untasted wine.
Her eyes I know are brown and liquid pools
Her skin an olive touched alabast'
Her voice has timbres rich and echoes cool
And all of these do make my heart run fast.
But if the gods be kind and she be too
My ignorance will one day turn to bliss
As I her earthly substance get to woo
And finally her favors get to kiss.
But while my senses have such limits known,
My heart has not, and so our love has grown.

Paul Undset

Sonnet for L

Are you my lover only in this place
Your virtues virtual, your warmth just art
Romantic gaming, but of love no trace
In fiction only that I sense your heart?
Or can true love these petty limits leap
True minds as Shakespeare said admitting none
No barriers or tempests that can keep
A love like ours at bay, beloved one?
Could there be world and time for us enough
As Andrew Marvel writes his Mistress Coy
A second life of pleasure striving rough
Against the strains of duty and of joy?
To answer "only here"--if that is said:
All poets lie and all romance is dead.

Paul Undset