



Inking the Unthinkable:
Poems about Poetry

A Lagan Online
Collection

[2]

LAGAN ONLINE

A  verbal PROJECT

... a place where every story matters ...

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"I use the words you taught me. If they don't mean anything any more, teach me others. Or let me be silent."

— *Samuel Beckett, Endgame*

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Jean O'Brien : *There Will Be Fish*

(Ovid)

I am casting my hooks and line into the still pools,
hoping to catch the bare bones of them, the filigree,
the shadowy outline, of what will be gasping
scaly threshing flesh when I land them;
all rainbow coloured and oily-eyed reflecting sky.
For now they are swimming under the shadows of rocks,
hovering almost motionless in the shallows.
When I cast my line they flick wriggling away
their scales lighting up like semaphore.
The muddy river bed churns, currents pummel the mud
creating galaxies of dancing moats, and the fish,
like creatures in a hall of mirrors flick and flash
playing hide and seek in the deeper water,
resigned I collect my empty pail, its aluminum
insides a shining metaphor for a cask of silver treasure.
I will come again tomorrow. There will be fish.

Jean O'Brien's 5th collection, *Fish on a Bicycle: New & Selected Poems*, came out from Salmon Poetry in 2016. An award winning poet she holds an M.Phil in creative writing from Trinity College, Dublin and tutors in creative writing. www.jeanobrien.ie

Ellen Sander : *To write poetry*

open that
paper flat before you

stain her
white gown with madness

grow that cloud til it
rains or dies

wedge that tasty
pain between buttered rye

weed that winking thatch
like it was love escaping

Ellen Sander, a lapsed New York rock journalist, incubated her poetry in Bolinas, California. Her latest chapbook, *Hawthorne, a House in Bolinas*, is published by Finishing Line Press. She was the Poet Laureate of Belfast, Maine in 2013 and 2014 and is the host of Poetry Woodshed Radio on WBFY-FM in Belfast.

Nick Griffins : *Writing a Poem*

Pick up a pen or pencil and lightly touch paper
until a spark is a flame; when a word appears
and a darkened line snakes across the page,

stand back and wait. But instead of watching,
close your eyes: listen: hear whether it's a damp squib
or explodes with champagne popping appreciation,

worthy of celebration; and if it is, pour it out
for others to share your intoxication, the bubbles
on the tongue that taste of your own vineyard,

and silently toast yourself.

Nick Griffiths, native of Birmingham, resident in Donegal for nearly twenty years, is co-editor of North West Words online magazine. His poems can regularly be heard at the monthly readings at Florence Food Company in Letterkenny.

Rachel Coventry : *Collecting wood*

A poem is nothing
But a sequence of words
Like a shopping list
Or receipt

Just as a spoken word
Is nothing other
Than a convulsion
Of larynx and tongue;

Nothing but a blunt
Log thrown down
On top of a pile
To burn.

What then is flame,
That it can blaze
Through hearts,
Fuel, or page?

Do you remember us
As skittish
Young women,
Collecting wood

At the man-made
Lac de Salagou,
Acting as if
We actually had to?

Rachel Coventry : *Cataract IV*

It's like the motion of water
so impossible to capture in words

to succeed is to fly. For Bridget Riley,
a deformity of the eye.

Repeating waves red, blue, white.
Everything moving yet quiet.

What's the point of saying anything?
Why not sink into clichéd indifference?

Look how quickly the water
closes over Icarus.

Rachel Coventry's poetry features in many journals including Poetry Ireland Review, The SHop, Cyphers, Stony Thursday Book, and Honest Ulsterman. She was short-listed for the 2016 Patrick Kavanagh Poetry Award and is currently writing a PhD on Heidegger's poetics at NUIG. Her debut collection is forthcoming from Salmon Poetry.

Shane Guthrie : *It had been months*

It had been months
Since the anti-poetry unit
Had turned up a genuine poet
There'd been rumours
And an arrest
But it would be just a misunderstanding
A message garbled
Scrapbooking gone awry

We breathed a collective sigh of relief
We were finally clean

But

There was still graffiti on the trains
Homeless people still slept under bridges
The war went on, some people said we were losing
And we started to wonder

Were the short story writers also in on it?

Shane Guthrie's poetry has been alternatively called 'devastating, humorous, radioactive and amusingly domestic'. He is happy to be published in *Hoarse*, *Your Hands Your Mouth*, *Landing Places: Immigrant Poets in Ireland* and *King County's poetry on buses*. He resides Duvall, Washington with his wonderful wife and two great kids.

Kate Ennals : *Poem, I want from you*

(after Adrienne Rich)

High voltage

I want my hand to hover over your lines

feel the heat, fan flames

Open windows

I want you to burn alive, squirm

I want you in the spin of a sycamore seed

to speak the texture of cat tongues

Paint in relief

do forbidden things like

drizzle me with frog spawn, time and rosemary

spit emblematic turns at me.

Kate Ennals is a poet and short story writer and has both genres published in a range of literary and online journals. Her first collection *At The Edge* was published in 2015. She currently runs poetry and writing workshops in County Cavan, and organises At The Edge, Cavan, a literary reading evening, funded by the Cavan Arts Office. kateennals.com

R.W. McLellan : *The night Donald Hall
made my father cry*

In a Victorian-style music hall rigged by sailors in the early 19th century, featuring a grand proscenium arch full of cherub carvings, I watched as an old man I admire do his best to ascend a small set of stairs onto the stage. The woman who assisted him up the steps him wore a red dress, though it could have been blue, and he shuffled to a small table, had a drink of water, and settled in to read his poems to the crowd.

My father, not much a man for verse until I found a calling in it, sat next to me in the third row as the hall hushed all the way up to the horseshoe balcony and painted ceiling dome. The poet read for half an hour to little applause. At the end, I saw Dad wipe tears from his eyes. There's a chance I didn't actually see this, and he would dispute it if you were to ask him, but I remember, and I don't think it was the poem that brought on the tears. I think Dad dug deeper, did what you're supposed to with poems. Maybe he thought of his father, dead four years then. Maybe he thought of the divorce, or years as a single father raising three boys. Maybe he thought about me, one of his sons who will one day have to watch him grow old.

I hope, however, that the tears came from just how goddamn beautiful it was to be there, to be able to remember these things, to see his son so moved, to hear that old man's words float out into the dark.

RW McLellan is a poet, teacher, editor, and songwriter currently writing and teaching in the woods of western Maine where he lives with his wife. His book *Plenty of Blood to Spare* (2012) was published by Sargent Press and his work has appeared in numerous journals and magazines, most recently in *Buck Off Magazine*, *Lower East Side Review*, and *The Subterranean Review*.

James Meredith : *Instruction & attempt at tanka*

try with simple words
to describe how life is sad
without saying how —
freshly washed clothes on the line
the dust cloud rises

James Meredith lives and works in London.

Averil Meehan : *To Catch a Poem*

Find the cactus flower that blooms
with only after-dusk dew on desert sands.

Toast your fingers in the glow from packing frost
into snowballs, seek out snowflake patterns
hidden in their molten flow as they melt.

Search with sea-swimming salmon along shores
for the river pouring out the strongest flow of fresh,
then leaping, follow the current upwards.

Run with the hare over hills, nibble primrose
and clover, but hop fast over bog-sodden tufts.

Smell the pine on a windy day, touch rough bark,
feel wind tussle hair as you climb, branch by branch,
until you can see clear across the forest to the sea.

Averil Meehan writes poetry, drama and fiction. Her writing has been published in literary journals and placed in various writing competitions. Her first poetry collection, "Until Stones Blossom" is published by Summer Palace Press. Her radio play, "A Family Christmas" was broadcast twice by RTE.

Órla Fay : *The Just Written Poem*

for Antonia Pozzi

*I saw the angel in the marble and carved until I set
him free. – Michelangelo*

All that matters is the just written poem
that struggles for shape and form as a child,
the student's hand dabbles in shade and tone.

Madonna by window she measures thumb
against the canvas that is not yet styled
all that matters is the just written poem.

Here she gazes on the careful kingdom
but the angel declared from marble smiled –
the artist's hand dabbles in shade and tone.

The spire concurs in the town that is shtum,
embroidered by march fields daffodil filled,
all that matters is the just written poem.

Song comes in time revised to a rhythm;
brushstrokes in waves are energy distilled.
The master's hand dabbles in shade and tone.

On paper breath finds a natural home,
her thoughts and feelings are there reconciled.
All that matters is the just written poem,
the woman's hand dabbles in shade and tone.

Órla Fay is the editor of Boyne Berries Magazine and the secretary of Boyne Writers Group. Recently her work has appeared in *The Ogham Stone*, *A New Ulster*, and *The Honest Ulsterman*. Órla had poems longlisted in *The Fish Poetry Prize 2017* and *The Anthony Cronin International Poetry Award 2017*.
orlafay.blogspot.ie/

Howie Good : *The Poet in Winter*

Snow is blowing
every which way,

scraps of paper
on each one of which

another word I need
has just been erased.

Howie Good is the author of *The Loser's Guide to Street Fighting*, winner of the 2017 Lorien Prize for Poetry from Thoughtcrime Press, and *Dangerous Acts Starring Unstable Elements*, winner of the 2015 Press Americana Prize for Poetry. He co-edits White Knuckle Press with Dale Wisely.

Mendes Biondo : *What Happen To The Wrong Words?*

do they fall down in the heart
of the earth as Satan did?
do they live in the shadow
hidden from other words
as invisible beasts?
or are they here
nearer than we think
more dangerous than we believe?
they are the chimeras
of our spellcasts
awaiting our fall
to bring us down
in a desperate world

Mendes Biondo's poems have been published by *Visual Verse, The Plum Tree Tavern, Poetry Pasta, Scrittura Magazine, Angela Topping – Hygge Feature, The BeZine, I Am Not A Silent Poet and Ink, Sweat and Tears*. He is one of the contributors of *Resurrection of a Sunflower* (Pski's Porch).

Seth Crook : *Between p147 and p149*

This poem is small.

Tiny, even teeny.

Sub-microscopic.

Even ants must reach
for magnifying glasses, peer,
squint to find the topic--

then wonder why they bothered,
leap like frogs on steroids,
quickly hop it.

Seth Crook lives on Mull. He can see Mallin Head from the small hill behind his house (on a clear day). His poems have been published in such places as *The Shop*, *The Moth*, *Southlight*, *Northwords Now*, *Burning Bush2*, *Envoi*, *The Rialto*. Some have recently appeared in *Trio* (Cinnamon Press).

Patricia Hughes : *Value*

A poem arrived.

I scorned words at first.
I knew only phrases that pulled me down,
a punch in the throat hushing me into silence.

Being sectioned left me vacant,
removed from society and myself.
I danced the sad slipper shuffle,
perfected my pill popping pout,
grew fat on antipsychotics
and days that stood still for months.

My hurt became smaller when written down,
ink diluting your handprints from around my neck,
blue bruises on the page.

It didn't change my history, yet
a poem arrived, and it was sad,
as the world sometimes is.

Patricia Hughes is new to the poetry scene, and cites poetry as her avenue to recovery from mental illness.

Alan David Pritchard : *I Need To Know*

So you aren't a real poet?

No. I just take words and kick them at imaginary goalposts
spray-painted against the rough brickwork of my
memory,

like a poor kid with dirty feet and a squalid imagination
penalty kicking at the noise of jumbled graffiti
mindlessly messing about in a
concrete makeshift playground.

So your words aren't poetry?

No, my words are vomit that I smear with newspaper
to make patterns to delight the squeamish,
and as the rains of some other experience
shove them towards the drains,
the implications of change
become something
to momentarily consider.

So this isn't a poem?

No, this is exactly as much of a poem as the dirty
shark-shaped cloud is a real fish that you catch
with a broken umbrella in the shade of a
boring summer's haze. I am glad I

could console you with the
quiet certainty
of my dirty
lies.

So you aren't real?

Yes.

Alan David Pritchard's poems have been published in magazines, anthologies and websites worldwide. His video poem 'Like So' was selected as an official entry into the Visible Verse Festival in Vancouver, and he has been invited to read at the Poets Café in London. *Window Spit* is his second collection.

Colin Dardis : *Prescription*

Please read all of this poem carefully before you start taking POETRY. Keep this poem. You may need to read it again.

Recommended dosage: take at least ONCE daily, or as required. Do not skip doses or discontinue use unless directed by your local poet.

What POETRY is and what it is used for: POETRY belongs to a group of medicines called literature, or literary art. It works by enlivening the brain and emboldening the soul.

Taking other medications: You may continue to take POETRY while taking other medications such as prose, drama, music, dance, and/or visual art.

Driving and using machines: POETRY may make you feel extraordinary. Do not operate heavy machinery while under the influence of POETRY.

If you take more than you should: It is not possible to overdose on POETRY.

If you forget to take POETRY: If you forget a dose, make up for it as soon as you can. Please refer to an anthology in emergency situations.

Possible side effects: Warning: side effects that may occur while taking POETRY include wider imagination, inspiration, education, wonder, enlightenment, euphoria, the provocation of thoughts, the stirring of memories, intrigue, curiosity, the desire to write, spontaneous filling of notebooks, late-night conversations, visits to the dictionary, knowledge, an aversion to clichés, empathy and an interest in open mic nights in your area. Some patients have reported an increased need to go to the library. If this symptom persists, please refer to your librarian. Contact your local poet immediately if you experience any of the following: ennui, apathy, discouragement, melancholy or woe.

What POETRY contains: The main active substances of poetry are: language, rhythm, sound, empathy, metaphor, cadence, form, rhyme, simile, allusion, alliteration, enjambment and imagery. For a full list of ingredients, see a specialist.

Storage: Store in a cool, dry bookcase. Once opened, you may continue to reuse POETRY repeatedly.

Expiration date: Never.

Colin Dardis is a poet, editor and freelance arts facilitator from Northern Ireland. One of Eyewear Publishing's Best New British and Irish Poets 2016, a collection with Eyewear, the x of y, is forthcoming in 2018.

Neil Slevin : *Escape*

In sobriety, singularity
and silence,
I search for
and solicit me.

I seek solace
in syllables,
sounds and senses
that stream

from somewhere inside,
some space
they spring from,
stretch to fill.

Neil Slevin MA, BSc is a writer from Co. Leitrim, based in Galway, Ireland, whose poetry has been published by various Irish publications and international journals, such as Scarlet Leaf Review and Artificium: The Journal. His flash fiction appeared in The Incubator. Neil co-edits Dodging The Rain.

John Jeffire : *The Place Where Poems Are Written*

It hasn't been swept or vacuumed in weeks.
Last night's shirt and socks drape the headboard,
A tabletop of pop cans and echoes from the attic.
We forgot whose turn it was to pay the electric so we
Sit dumb in front of open windows and commune
With unplugged fans, a week's groceries flatlining in the frig.
The cell hasn't stopped vibrating a St. Vitus' bop
On the stained coffee table, but it's on its last charge.
We missed garbage day—raccoons scavenge the trash
For thigh bones and unlicked aluminum lids.

Amidst this— words.
Ribcage shelved with books,
Eyes repaned and caulked,
Lawn-watered mundane detritus
That defines us all—
Paper, pen, the cleansing we must do.

John Jeffire was born in Detroit. In 2005, his novel Motown Burning was named Grand Prize Winner in the Mount Arrowsmith Novel Competition. His first book of poetry, Stone + Fist + Brick + Bone, was nominated for a Michigan Notable Book Award in 2009. Shoveling Snow in a Snowstorm, a poetry chapbook, was published by Finishing Line Press in 2016. writeondetroit.com.

Alice Kinsella : “*But why do you write poetry?*”

Because the smell of lavender makes a map
across my life-

The Valentia candle factory,
bees stripping stems of it in the Ballsbridge Barracks,
the first house I shared with a man.

Because of the way my stomach dropped
to my groin with my first kiss
while I was pelted with rain.
How I couldn't feel the cold.

Because I will never see his face again
and once I saw it for the last time
knowing soon it would melt into dirt
and mine would see another sunny day.

I write because I was here.
This life was real, I lived it.

Alice Kinsella's poetry has appeared in publications such as Banshee and The Irish Times. She has been listed for competitions including Over the Edge New Writer of the Year 2016 and Cinnamon Press Pamphlet Competition. Her first book of poems will be published in 2018. Find her on Facebook.com/AliceEKinsella

Peter Adair : *Guts*

I open my mouth.
The wrong words stumble

out. I might as well
be dumb. The sick

word. But sometimes
words breathe, speak:

heal, scar,
kick, gut.

Hard words to get
your tongue around.

Sometimes the right
words are found.

Peter Adair won the 2015 Translink Poetry Competition and the 2016 Funeral Services of Northern Ireland Poetry Competition. His poems after appeared in many journals. He is a 12NOW (New Original Writer) with Lagan Online. He lives in Bangor, Co Down.

Éamon Mag Uidhir : *A Clean Kill*

On a certain word admired in a friend's poem

A clean kill. No hollow-point, this
word of hers, alloyed of sense and feeling,
piercing the soul's surface easily,
with efficacy, unleashing shoals of
endorphins, bringing not a delirium but a
startling, a seizure of awareness stopping
all thought in its tracks, in a moment making
the complex plain and the plain elaborate,
and all this within a single line, within
a single courageous/outrageous adjective.

Éamon Mag Uidhir is a Dubliner by birth. He edited Icarus while at TCD and now edits the 'narrowsheet' FLARE, moderates the Facebook group Poetry Perp Walk, and runs the sonnetserver.com site. He was a Poetry Ireland Introductions reader in 2015. Many of his poems have appeared in print.

David Mitchell : *The stuff beyond words*

Some things you just can't write about.
You can try but you'll never capture,
Bottle and seal them so someone can pop the cork and
Suck them into their nostrils, just as they were.

Why? Because first, you must find the words.

And there are only so many words. And even if you find the
right ones and
Whip them, bribe them, teach them tricks and daring feats,
They're just symbols. Shapes and sounds.

They only get you so close.
Just to the door. Maybe a peek. No further.

Now, you realise this pretty quickly, when something
happens.
You realise that all the words and songs and scenes that have
been written
About that thing (if any have)
Are miles off. They're not it.

They don't have pimples or scratchy bits or
Extra parts not mentioned in the instruction booklet.

They're not this thing, this real thing.
This my thing.

And what you put on the page looks nothing like what's in
your heart and
Feels nothing like that foreign disturbance in your chest or
that
Dark wet cloud between your eyes.

And it drives you mad because you know the things that can't
be written about are
The things that really matter,
The things that, when you look back, are what you see.
Not the other stuff. Just this stuff.

The stuff beyond words.

Which all leads to one of two conclusions.
Either life is meant to be lived, not written about.
Or the things you just can't write about
Are the only things worth writing about.

David Mitchell is Assistant Professor of Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation at the Irish School of Ecumenics, Trinity College Dublin at Belfast. He is author of Politics and Peace in Northern Ireland (Manchester University Press, 2016) and co-author of Ex-combatants, Religion and Peace in Northern Ireland (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013). One of Lagan Online's 12NOW writers, he speaks regularly at home and abroad on conflict and peacemaking in Northern Ireland.

Emma Lee : *We have plenty of matches in
the house*

I look at the pencils you left behind,
smooth natural wood ending in a grey tip
like a dull match ready to burst into flames.
You used them to scrawl over paper
always leaving a line so you could go back
and sketch out the stress pattern,
rub out the ending to find a better rhyme,
to erase one word for a better one
or to ease an awkward rhythm,
create a poem as beautifully lined
as your pencils were always kept sharpened.

Emma Lee's most recent collection is "Ghosts in the Desert" (IDP, 2015). She co-edited "Over Land, Over Sea" (Five Leaves, 2015). She reviews, blogs at <http://emmalee1.wordpress.com> and tweets @Emma_Lee1.

David Butler : *Aistriúchán*

ón phortaingéilis (Fernando Pessoa : 'Autopsicgrafia')

Is bréagadóir an file
a ligeann air sa mhéid
go gcuireann sé pian bhréagach
in ionad a dhearbh-phéin.

Is an té a léann a fhilíocht
ní bhraitheann ón bhréag-phian léite
ceachtar de dhá cheann an fhile
ach pian nach raibh acu choíche.

Is amhlaidh ar iarnród na h-aighe
a ritheann, ar lorg siamsa,
an bréagán meicniúil
a dtugaimid air ná - croí-se.

David Butler's second poetry collection, All the Barbaric Glass, was published in March 2017 by Doire Press. Poetry awards include the Féile Filíochta, Ted McNulty, Brendan Kennelly, Phizfest, Baileborough and Poetry Ireland / Trocaire awards.
@DavidButlerBray

Frances Corkey Thompson : *Writing*

Into the deep clean well of thought,
of guarded treasures dearly bought
and bright with frequent wear –

into a sea of solitude
where inklings play and notions brood,
and no-one follows there –

falling, I find my element,
my emptiness, my pure intent,
my calm and my repair.

Frances Corkey Thompson comes from Belfast and lives in Devon. She has had two collections of poetry published, and over 100 of her poems appear in anthologies and magazines, mainly in the UK and Ireland (including several in Oxford Poets 2007, eds. David Constantine and Bernard O'Donoghue).

Seanín Hughes : *Human Poetry*

There is an elephant
in every room,
in the thickets

of our everyday
hush, hiding
in the greyspace of truth,

its flesh the colour of damp sky.
Look for it
in the art that spills

through muddy gutters
and fevered minds,
in filthy windows,

in impassioned protests
scrawled on inner city walls,
in the difference between terrorist

and man with a mental illness,
in gavels falling in favour
of rapists and the rich,

in the blindspots, the empty
chair at the dinner table
six months later,

in aftermath, in bodies as property,
bodies for profit, in poverty
and buildings burning

at arm's length.

Look for it everywhere,
in our ordinary honesties.

Seanín Hughes is a poet and writer from Cookstown, Northern Ireland. She has been published by a number of online platforms, most notably Poethead and Dodging the Rain, and has been selected to exhibit her work as part of the forthcoming Aspects Literary Arts Festival in Northern Ireland. Seanín hopes to complete her debut pamphlet later this year.

Emma McKervey : *Mad Curator*

There's a mad curator living in the attic of my mind.
She covets everything she sees
as she straightens her collections in clean delineation,
leans them against the whitewashed walls,
orders and defines, claims them as her own.
She takes her forms from whatever she gleans,
scrutinises each moment, shakes them out
and structures arrangements more pleasing to the eye.
My senses are ciphers for the lubitorium of her desire.
She haunts and roams from lobe to lobe,
she harmonises the disparate offerings I bring -
coercing into truth life's inaccuracies.

Emma McKervey is a writer living in Hollywood. Her work features in many publications in the ROI and UK and her debut collection The Rag Tree Speaks will be published by the Doire Press in late September 2017.

Breda Wall Ryan : *Poetry is*

Inevitable. What the snail writes on cabbages.
The language the unconscious speaks

when it talks to itself. A cure for death.
The owner's manual for the human psyche.

Random fragments of one enormous poem
waiting for the Invisible to join the dots.

A crossroads where all the fingerposts point
to terra incognita — our spiritual destiny.

A hand-drawn pictorial map of the dreamscape.
We walk always into the dark, whistling.

Poetry is the word scribbled on the inner arm
from wrist to line-break, an electrical field

that stand the hair on end. Feel it,
see time stand still by the dandelion clock,

the intense unbearable blue of speedwell,
the shredded tiger in the marmalade.

Breda Wall Ryan lives in Bray, Co Wicklow. Language, nature and mythology are driving forces in her poetry which has been widely published, translated and broadcast. Among her awards are The Gregory O'Donoghue International Poetry Prize and iYeats Poetry Prize. In 2016, In a Hare's Eye (Doire Press) won the Shine/Strong Award for a first collection.

Amy Karon : *Some poems*

are under-done sponges
that ooze down the page, leaving
a treacly aftertaste,

or scraps of hard-boiled leather
that bruise gums and steal spit
on the way to the bin

but your poem

is hot salt on a sea day
buttered lemon-basil scones
and fingers, flushed and wrinkled
newborn, awaiting kisses.

Amy Karon lives and writes in San Jose, California.

Deirdre McClay : *Sparring*

Who deserves this -
Me or You?
Which of us is poet?

I fall easily to it,
and you,
punc-tu-ate well.

I punch a quirky metaphor -
you pour words like cream.

I tell it as it is with crust -
you measure staccato and flow.

My poems zing with wit -
yours, sing-song like hymn.

I punch.
You persuade.
We poem.

Deirdre McClay has published fiction and poetry, including work in the *Irish Times*, *Crannog*, *Wordlegs*, *Boyne Berries*, *Honest Ulsterman* and *Number Eleven*. She has been nominated for a *Hennessy First Fiction Award* and is a member of both the *Garden Room Writers* and the organising team of *North West Words*.

Bex Dansereau : *The Words That Fit*

The first draft is a cheap string of words
like synthetic lace from Victoria Secret.
The poem seems decent, until you lift
and drag the fatty tissue along the underwire
and the skin rolls over the cotton, spilling out.
The second draft involves a gentle whittling
like adjusting bra straps, but tightening
and loosening can only do so much.

And the final draft is down to the barest
bones and sharpest colours; proper breast
depth and strong foundation for the roots
and the skin lays flush against fabric,
no wrinkles, pinching or overflow.

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Thank you for reading!

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