

Dungannon Music and Drama Festival – 2020

A Chubby Little Snowman

A chubby little snowman
Had a carrot nose;
Along came a rabbit
And what do you suppose?
That hungry little bunny,
Looking for his lunch,
ATE the snowman's carrot nose...
Nibble, nibble, CRUNCH!

Anon

A Dragon in the Classroom

There's a dragon in the classroom:
its body is a box,
its head's a plastic waste-bin,
its eyes are broken clocks,

its legs are cardboard tubes,
its claws are toilet rolls,
its tongues's my dad's old tie
(that's why it's full of holes).

'Oh, what a lovely dragon,'
our teacher smiled and said.
'you *are* a pretty dragon,'
She laughed and stroked its head.

'Oh no, I'm not,' he snorted,
SNAP! SNAP! he moved his jaw
and chased our screaming teacher
along the corridor.

Charles Thomson

A Garden

If I should have a garden
I know how it would be,
There's be daisies and buttercups
And an apple tree.

A dog would chase a ball there,
A bird would sit and sing,
And a little cat would play with
A little piece of string.

And in the very middle
I'd only have to stand
For ladybirds and butterflies
To settle on my hand.

Leila Berg

An Ordinary Day

I took my mind a walk
Or my mind took me a walk –
Whichever was the truth of it.

The light glittered on the water
Or the water glittered in the light.
Cormorants stood on tidal rock

With their wings spread out,
Stopping no traffic. Various ducks
Shilly-shallied here and there

On the shilly-shallying water.
An occasional gull yelped. Small flowers
Were doing their level best

To bring to their kerb bees like
Aerial charabancs. Long weeds in the clear
Water did Eastern dances, unregarded

By shoals of darning needles. A cow
Started a moo but thought
Better of it ... And my feet took me home

And my mind observed to me,
Or I to it, how ordinary
Extraordinary things are or

How extraordinary ordinary
Things are, like the nature of the mind
And the process of observing.

Norman MacCaig

Divali

Winter stalks us
like a leopard in the mountains
scenting prey.

It grows dark,
bare trees stick black bars
across the moon's silver eye.

I will light my lamp for you
Lakshmi,
drive away the darkness.

Welcome you into my home
Lakshmi,
beckon you from every window.

With light that blazes
out like flames
across the sombre sky.

Certain houses
crouch in shadow, do not hear
your gentle voice.

Will not feel
your gentle heartbeat
bring prosperity and fortune.

Darkness hunts them
like a leopard in the mountains
stalking prey.

David Harmer

February the Fifteenth

February the fifteenth
What's remarkable about that?
Another nonedescript winter's day
Bare trees, cold wind, drizzly rain
Clouds of dreary grey

But in our house
February the fifteenth
Is brilliant
Like a blazing sun
Bursting through the rain clouds
Lighting everything up
With happy colours.

My baby brother
Was born today.
From now on
February the fifteenth
Will be Superspecialhooraybabybrother Day

Roger Stevens

Five Little Owls

Five little owls in an old elm tree,
Fluffy and puffy as owls could be,
Blinking and winking with big round eyes
At the big round moon that hung in the skies:
As I passed beneath I could hear one say,
'There'll be mouse for supper, there will, today!'
Then all of them hooted, 'Tu-whit, tu-who
Yes, mouse for supper, hoo hoo, hoo hoo!'

Anon

Four O'Clock Friday

Four o'clock Friday, I'm home at last.
Time to forget the week that's past.
On Monday, in break they stole my ball
And threw it over the playground wall.
On Tuesday afternoon, in games,
They threw mud at me and called me names.
On Wednesday, they trampled my books on the floor,
So Miss kept me in because I swore.
On Thursday, they laughed after the test
'Cause my marks were lower than the rest.
Four o'clock Friday, at last I'm free,
For two whole days they can't get at me.

John Foster

Friends

I fear it's very wrong of me
And yet I must admit,
When someone offers friendship
I want the *whole* of it.
I don't want everybody else
To share my friends with me.
At least, I want *one* special one,
Who indisputedly,

Likes me much more than all the rest,
Who's always on my side,
Who never cares what others say,
Who lets me come and hide
Within his shadow, in his house -
It doesn't matter where -
Who lets me simply be myself,
Who's always, *always* there.

Elizabeth Jennings

Good Hope

I believe

There is enough food
On this planet
For everyone.

I believe

That it is possible
For all people
To live in peace.

I believe

We can live
Without guns,
I believe everyone
Is important.

I believe there are good Christians

And good Muslims,
Good Jews
And good not sures,
I believe
There is good in everyone
I believe in people.

If I did not believe

I would stop writing.

I know

Every day
Children cry for water,
And every day
Racists attack,
Still every day
Children play
With no care for colour.

So I believe **there is hope**

And I hope
That there are many believers
Believing
There is hope,
That is what I hope,
And this is what I believe,
I believe in you,
Believe me.

Benjamin Zephaniah

Holidays at Home

There was a family who, every year,
Would go abroad, sometimes to Italy,
Sometimes to France. The youngest did not dare
To say, 'I much prefer to stay right here.'

You see, abroad there were no slot machines,
No bright pink rock with one name going through it,
No rain, no boarding houses, no baked beans,
No landladies, and no familiar scenes.

And George, the youngest boy, so longed to say,
'I don't like Greece, I don't like all those views,
I don't like having fierce sun every day,
And, most of all, I just detest the way

The food is cooked – that garlic and that soup,
Those strings of pasta, and no cakes at all.'
The family wondered why George seemed to droop
And looked just like a thin hen in a coop.

They never guessed why when they said, 'Next year
We can't afford abroad, we'll stay right here,'
George looked so pleased and soon began to dream
Of piers, pink rock, deep sand, and Devonshire cream.

Elizabeth Jennings

Honey Bear

There was a big bear
Who lived in a cave;
His greatest love
Was honey.
He had twopence a week
Which he never could save,
So he never had
Any money.
I bought him a money box
Red and round,
In which to put
His money.
He saved and saved
Till he got a pound,
Then spent it all
On honey.

Elizabeth Lang

Humming Bird

I can imagine, in some other world
Primeval-dumb, far back
In that most awful stillness, that gasped and hummed,
Humming-birds raced down the avenues.

Before anything had a soul,
While life was a heave of Matter, half inanimate,
This little bit chirped off in brilliance
And went whizzing through the slow, vast, succulent stems.

I believe there were no flowers, then
In the world where humming bird flashed ahead of creation.
I believe he pierced the slow vegetable veins with his long beak.

Probably he was big
As mosses, and little lizards, they say were once big.
Probably he was a jabbing, terrifying monster.

We look at him through the wrong end of the telescope of Time,
Luckily for us.

DH Lawrence

I Can See You Now

When I first met
My blind friend Grace
She said, 'Will you please let me
Touch your face?'

I felt her gentle hands
Upon my skin:
She felt my lips and eyebrows
Then my nose and cheeks and chin.

Last of all she felt my hair
And gently held my head
Then with a lovely smile:
'I can see you now,' she said.

Eric Finney

Leisure

What is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare?

No time to stand beneath the boughs
And stare as long as sheep and cows.

No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.

No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night.

No time to turn at beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance.

No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began.

A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

WH Davies

My Sister's Eating Porridge

My sister's eating porridge
It's going everywhere.
Up her nose and down her front;
A dollop in her hair.

My sister's eating porridge,
She's missed her mouth again.
Now it's dripping off her spoon
Like lumpy porridge rain.

My sister's eating porridge
And most is on the floor.
No wonder she is hungry
And crying out for, 'More!'

John Coldwell

Noah and the Rabbit

'No land,' said Noah,
'There - is - not - any - land.
Oh, Rabbit, Rabbit, can't you understand?'

But Rabbit shook his head:
'Say it again,' he said;
'And slowly, please.
No good brown earth for burrows,
And no trees;
No wastes where vetch and rabbit-parsley grows,
No brakes, no bushes and no turnip rows,
No holt, no upland, meadowland or weald,
No tangled hedgerow and no playtime field?'

'No land at all - just water,' Noah replied,
And Rabbit sighed.
'For always, Noah?' he whispered, 'will there be
Nothing henceforth for ever but the sea?
Or will there come a day
When the green earth will call me back to play?'

Noah bowed his head:
'Some day ... some day,' he said.

Hugh Chesterman

Old Meg

Old Meg she was a Gipsej,
And liv'd upon the Moors;
Her bed it was the brown heath turf,
And her house was out of doors.

Her apples were swart blackberries,
Her currants, pods o'broom;
Her wine was dew of the wild white rose,
Her book a churchyard tomb.

Her Brothers were the craggy hills,
Her Sisters larchen trees;
Alone with her great family
She liv'd as she did please.

No breakfast had she many a morn,
No dinner many a noon,
And, `stead of supper, she would stare
Full hard against the moon.

But every morn, of woodbine fresh
She made her garlanding,
And, every night, the dark glen Yew
She wove, and she would sing.

And with her fingers, old and brown,
She plaited Mats o'Rushes,
And gave them to the cottagers
She met along the Bushes.

Old Meg was brave as Margaret Queen
And tall as Amazon;
An old red blanket cloak she wore,
A chip hat had she on.
God rest her aged bones somewhere!
She died full long ago!

John Keats

Over the Park

I want to go on the see-saw,
I want to go on the slide
and, look, over there is a roundabout...
I want to have a ride.

I know I've been on the see-saw,
I know I've been on the slide,
I know I've been on a roundabout,
I know I've had a ride.

I know we've been here a long time
and I've fallen off the see-saw,
I know I've had lots and lots of goes,
but can't I have one more?
Pleeeeeeeeeeeese...

Charles Thomson

Ozymandias

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: `Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert... Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed:
And on the pedestal these words appear:
'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!'
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

Percy Bysshe Shelley

Patchy Bear

I'm a roly-poly
plump teddy bear
with a lopsided smile
and gold-coloured fur

I've lost my growl
and a lot of my hair
I'm old and I'm bald
and my fur has gone bare

but I love to be cuddled
and snuggle in bed
I need someone to say
You're my very best Ted

I like listening to stories
to dance and to play
I can keep secrets
and I'll do what you say

I need someone special
a friend just like you
so take care of me
and I'll take care of you.

Joan Poulson

Rainbow Rice

When Arzana came to school today
She wore silky robes
That smelled of spices
And excitement.

She spoke of candle flames
And fireworks
That still sparkled in her eyes,
And she brought us bowls
Of rainbow-coloured rice
Tasting of sugar
And sweet surprises.

I shall forget the dates
Of kings and queens
And far-off battles.
I shall forget the names
Of tiny islands
In shimmering seas.
A thousand facts will slip from my mind
Like scuttling mice,

But years from now,
When I am no longer young
The tingle of Arzana's rainbow rice
Will always be
On the tip of my tongue.

Clare Bevan

Silver

Slowly, silently, now the moon
Walks the night in her silver shoon;
This way, and that, she peers, and sees
Silver fruit upon silver trees;
One by one the casements catch
Her beams beneath the silvery thatch;
Couched in his kennel, like a log,
With paws of silver sleeps the dog;
From their shadowy cote the white breasts peep
Of doves in a silver-feathered sleep;
A harvest mouse goes scampering by,
With silver claws, and silver eye;
And moveless fish in the water gleam,
By silver reeds in a silver stream.

Walter de la Mare

Soggy Greens

Oh, soggy greens I hate you,
I hate your sloppy slush;
And if my mum would let me,
I'd throw you in a bush.

Oh, apple pie I love you,
I love your crunchy crust;
And if my mum would let me,
I'd eat you till I bust.

John Cunliffe

TADPOLES

Ten little tadpoles
playing in a pool.
'Come,' said the water-rat,
'come along to school.
Come and say your tables,
sitting in a row.'
And all the little tadpoles said,
'No, no, no!'

Ten little tadpoles
swimming in and out,
Racing and diving
And turning round about:
'Come,' said their mother,
'dinner-time, I guess.'
And all the little tadpoles cried,
'Yes, yes, yes!'

Rose Fyleman

TUEN NG (The Dragon Boat Races)

The air is hushed
round waiting boats;
water still before the race.
Slowly paddles lift
above the dragon-prows
like giant wing-bones
from a waking beast, stretching into space...

And then...
they're off!
Away!

Fish scatter in dismay
as dragon-racers slice the surface.
Wings dip, whip water into waves;
waves rise like flames,
set light by sun.

Above, flags tug at their fetters,
desperate to join the fun.
And all around,
like pumping, thumping dragon-hearts,
the pounding gongs,
the beating drum.

Judith Nicholls

The Farmer and the Queen

'She's coming,' the farmer said to the owl.
'Oh, what shall I, what shall I do?
Shall I bow when she comes?
Shall I twiddle my thumbs?'
The owl asked, 'Who?'

'The Queen, the Queen, the royal Queen -
She'll pass the farm today.
Shall I salute?' he asked the horse.
The horse said, 'Nay.'

'Shall I give her a gift?' he asked the wren.
'A lovely memento for her to keep?
An egg or a peach or an ear of corn?'
The wren said, 'Cheap.'

'But should I curtsy or should I cheer?
Oh, here's her carriage now.
What should I do?' he asked the dog.
The dog said, 'Bow.'

And so he did, and so she passed,
Oh, tra lala lala,
'She smiled, she did!' he told the sheep.
The sheep said, 'Bah.'

Shel Silverstein

The Highwayman

PART ONE

The wind was a torrent of darkness among the gusty trees,
The moon was a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas,
The road was a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor,
And the highwayman came riding-
 Riding-riding-
The highwayman came riding, up to the old inn-door.

He'd a French cocked-hat on his forehead, a bunch of lace at his chin,
A coat of the claret velvet, and breeches of brown doe-skin;
They fitted with never a wrinkle: his boots were up to the thigh.
And he rode with a jewelled twinkle,
 His pistol butts a-twinkle,
His rapier hilt a-twinkle, under the jewelled sky.

Over the cobbles he clattered and clashed in the dark inn-yard,
And he tapped with his whip on the shutters, but all was locked and barred;
He whistled a tune to the window, and who should be waiting there
But the landlord's black-eyed daughter,
 Bess, the landlord's daughter,
Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her long black hair.

And dark in the dark old inn-yard a stable-wicket creaked
Where Tim the ostler listened; his face was white and peaked;
His eyes were hollows of madness, his hair like mouldy hay,
But he loved the landlord's daughter,
 The landlord's red-lipped daughter.
Dumb as a dog he listened, and he heard the robber say-

'One kiss, my bonny sweetheart, I'm after a prize to-night,
But I shall be back with the yellow gold before the morning light;
Yet, if they press me sharply, and harry me through the day,
Then look for me by moonlight,
 Watch for me by moonlight,
I'll come to thee by moonlight, though hell should bar the way.'

He rose upright in the stirrups; he scarce could reach her hand,
But she loosened her hair i' the casement! His face burnt like a brand
As the black cascade of perfume came tumbling over his breast;
And he kissed its waves in the moonlight,
 (Oh, sweet, black waves in the moonlight!)
Then he tugged at his rein in the moonlight, and galloped away to the west.

Alfred Noyes

The Lady of Shalott

Part I

On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
And thro' the field the road runs by
To many-tower'd Camelot;
And up and down the people go,
Gazing where the lilies blow
Round an island there below,
The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver
Thro' the wave that runs for ever
By the island in the river
Flowing down to Camelot.
Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
Overlook a space of flowers,

And the silent isle imbowers
The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,
Slide the heavy barges trail'd
By slow horses; and unhail'd
The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd
Skimming down to Camelot:
But who hath seen her wave her hand?
Or at the casement seen her stand?
Or is she known in all the land,
The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early
In among the bearded barley,
Hear a song that echoes cheerly
From the river winding clearly,
Down to tower'd Camelot:
And by the moon the reaper weary,
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
Listening, whispers 'Tis the fairy
Lady of Shalott.'

Alfred Lord Tennyson

The Magic Piper

There piped a piper in the wood
Strange music - soft and sweet -
And all the little wild things
Came hurrying to his feet.

They sat around him on the grass,
Enchanted, unafraid,
And listened, as with shining eyes
Sweet melodies he made.

The wood grew green, and flowers sprang up,
The birds began to sing;
For the music it was magic,
And the piper's name was — Spring!

E L Marsh

The Shooting Stars

That night
we went out in the dark
and saw the shooting stars
was one of the best nights ever

It was as if someone
was throwing paint
across the universe

The stars just kept coming
and we 'oohed' and 'aahed'
like on bonfire night

And it didn't matter
they weren't real stars -
just bits of dust on fire
burning up in the atmosphere

And we stayed out there for ages
standing on this tiny planet
staring up at the vast cosmos

And I shivered
with the thrill
of it all

James Carter

The Way Through The Woods

They shut the road through the woods
Seventy years ago.
Weather and rain have undone it again,
And now you would never know
There was once a road through the woods
Before they planted the trees.
It is underneath the coppice and heath
And the thin anemones.
Only the keeper sees
That, where the ring-dove broods,
And the badgers roll at ease,
There was once a road through the woods.

Yet, if you enter the woods
Of a summer evening late,
When the night-air cools on the trout-ringed pools
Where the otter whistles his mate,
(They fear not men in the woods,

Because they see so few.)
You will hear the beat of a horse's feet,
And the swish of a skirt in the dew,
Steadily cantering through
The misty solitudes,
As though they perfectly knew
The old lost road through the woods...
But there is no road through the woods.

Rudyard Kipling

Undertable Land

Daddy's baggy trousers,
Grandma's bony knees,
Tommy's lost a slipper,
Someone's dropped some cheese.

Chair legs, their legs, table legs,
The hairs on Grandpa's hand...
No one knows what I can see
In Undertable Land.

Up above the table top,
Chatter and clatter of tea.
Down here, invisible,
No one else but me.

Listening to what they say...
Some I understand.
But I know all there is to know
In Undertable Land.

Paul Rogers