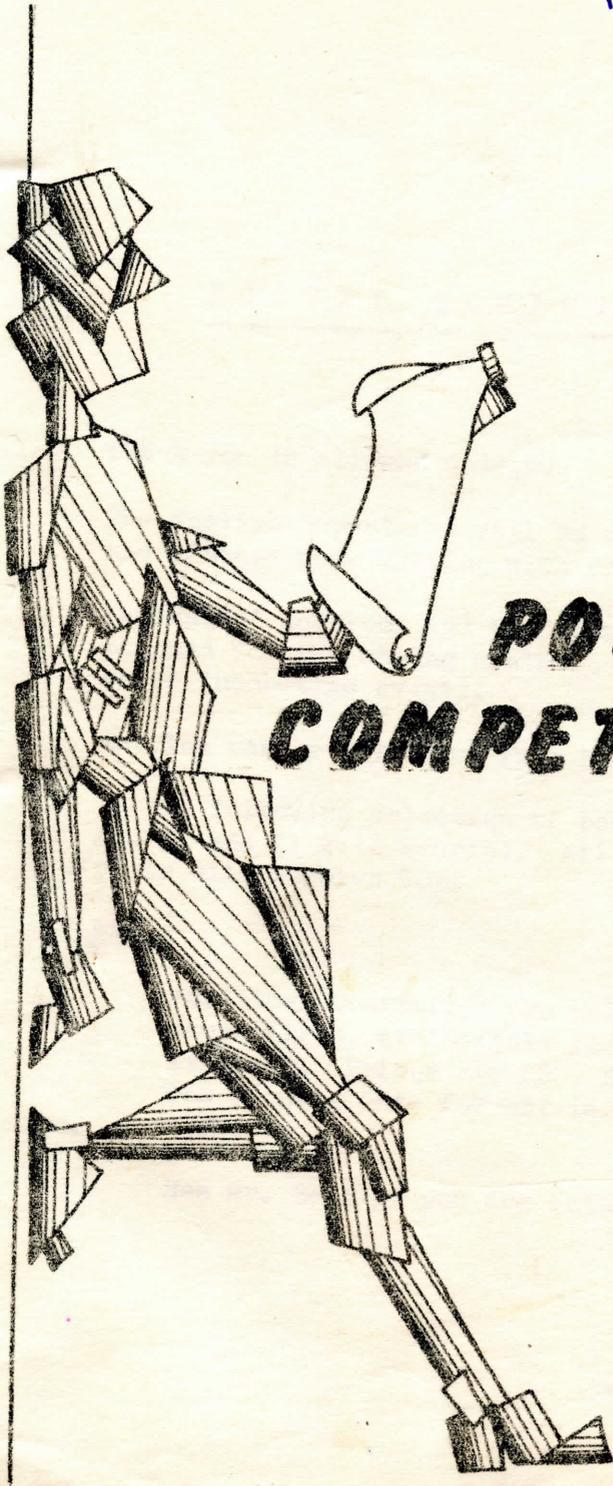


Mr. Johnson.



**POETRY  
COMPETITION**

the corner

POSTER  
COMMITTEE

## POETRY COMPETITION

Thank you to all who entered.

The English Department will be delighted to see and discuss your writing with you personally.

'Workshop' sessions and poetry readings are planned for the coming months. Try to support these lunch-time events.

Entries can be retrieved from E.4.

In the following selection of poems, prizes of £4, £2 and £1 will awarded. All other published poets will receive 50p.

### EXTRA

'Critical Quarterly' are holding a poetry competition, exclusively for sixth-form students. Prizes are £30, £20 and £10. The closing date for entries is 31st December 1978.

See Mr. Bell if you are interested.

FIRST PRIZE

G. Woolfrey T.4.

The room was oppressive  
Genteel china clinked  
Syncopating the dull tick  
of mantel clock.  
We escaped:  
Down the sunken road.  
Guard of honour  
were bare winter elms  
whose twigs were switches  
against dark grey cloud  
lowering over a field of red ploughed soil.  
We tasted the salt as we came to the beach.  
The dog barked at the icy waters  
and went in pursuit of a flat pebble  
I'd tried to skim on the swell.  
My neice ran off  
and the shingle slithered from under her feet.  
The wind snarled her hair with sea-spray  
and snatched my voice  
as I called the dog  
and we laboured up the path  
to the top of the cliff.  
We lay on our bellies and looked over the edge  
where the white sea was swirling  
into a hollow gouged from the rock base,  
Compelling us to jump.  
Rain fell like spears  
So we set off homewards  
for supper  
And the viciousness  
of which only families are capable.

\* \* \*

PERFORMANCES

Tight poet's cheeks  
on stringy neck  
bobbing as if  
pecking out lyric  
from grey words.

Passive savage audience  
analyse the rhyme  
of personal experience  
discuss the enjambement  
make you sweat  
under spot lights.

Dissect your memories  
in silent consensus  
regurgitate you whole.

\* \* \*

SLUGS

Why always behind?  
Why are you always behind?  
Your legs are, after all, longer than mine,  
So therefore,  
by logical reasoning,  
so should your strides be.  
And, thus, you should be a good way ahead of me  
But you are behind.

Life has classes.  
There are three social classes.  
The first is of people who always stride  
ahead,  
make the first steps,  
determined face,  
set the pace,  
win the race,  
with grace.  
They are generally those persons fortunate enough  
to have  
abnormally  
long  
legs.  
You have very long legs.

Very, very long legs  
But you are not of that class.  
The second class belongs to those who keep up,  
do their best,  
fight the test,  
good sport,  
well taught  
and fought.  
good try,

good try,  
bad luck, old thing,  
you kings sing and swing,  
on strings  
but wings  
in slings  
won't carry you to the front  
That's blunt  
you  
crust.

The third class  
The third and final class  
Belongs to those whose motion is limited to the  
flaring of a nostril induced by a snore,  
pinned to the floor,  
dead to the core -  
the stragglers.  
They are the people with squatty little legs,  
Stubby,  
fat little smug-faced worms.  
You, sir, are a straggler.  
A peasant.  
Despite the length of your legs.  
You were meant to be behind,  
Behind in birth, life, death,  
Behind in thought, speech,  
movement,  
Behind in growth, emotion, pain  
You are a straggler.  
Born a peasant,  
Born a slug.

\* \* \*

THIRD PRIZE

Tim Lee

Take me  
shouted  
The sun to the moon.

Make me  
shouted  
The son to the man.

Save me  
shouted  
The seagull to the swallow.

Leave me  
shouted  
The shore to the sea.

Love me  
shouted  
The sunset to the virgin.

\* \* \*

ROSE

Brushing away the dust  
from the matchbox,  
Then pushing it open  
just took  
a few seconds.

Inside  
a beautiful  
paper rose  
lay,  
its petals a  
vivid red,  
preserved long.

I put the lifeless rose  
between my forefinger  
and thumb,  
then I squeezed.

The shattered rose  
fell to the floor  
amongst the shadows,  
I tried to find it  
but could not.

\* \* \* \*



The Balloon

Its belly was full and near to bursting,  
Hot air rises so the waying goes,  
It appeared to be true,  
At least the balloon soared high.  
From its throne high in the sky  
The kingdom below was surveyed.  
The passengers would not be masters,  
The balloon would sail across the blue sea  
As far as it wished,  
And where it so desired.  
This was a king's realm  
Where all below were small and petty.  
Here the balloon ruled  
Surrounded by its protectors,  
Those metal birds that flew so high,  
And fast, and regally,  
It was and is the land of dreams,  
But soon things must return to earth,  
Both in body and in mind,  
For in both senses  
What goes up must come down.

\* \* \*

Price's Revisited

(A long way after Wordsworth and others)

Five years have past, five summers  
With the length of five long winters,  
And again I stand beside the spot  
Where lies, memorial to William Price,  
A simple stone praising his bounty.  
What would he think if he could see  
The stream of students passing constantly,  
So uniformly denim-clad,  
shapely, shapeless girls shoehorned in  
jeans,  
Displaying far more straining canvas  
Than ever carried by a clipper fleet.  
Then I recalled the day,  
Not all that many years ago,  
When the assistants, chic, audace,  
Not used to our monastic ways,  
Had ventured in wearing a trouser suit.  
What consternation in the staff room!  
What apoplexy in the office!  
But Tom had warned in vain  
About the monstrous regiment,  
For here they were, unnumbered,  
Some dripping ethnic tat;  
Others, more charitably inclined,  
Owed their appearance more to Gifsa.  
But who was this coming my way,  
With hair streaming wildly in the breeze?  
Was that a necklace he was wearing,  
Peeping above a gaudy oriental scarf?  
He passed, his christian name on every lip,  
Leaving me perplexed. There followed  
A small band of youths, obviously hotfoot  
From Lambeth, sporting each a pectoral cross  
Of massive size. Behind them, more unwillingly,  
Came three, having a final lingering puff  
Before they reached the gates.  
With memories of young gentlemen,



The Phoenix of the Sky

Arise  
O wingless bird,  
To your full glory at the top of the world.  
Gently climb the ladder  
To the blue eternity,  
Announcing the beginning in your own silent way.  
Your subtlety is a contrast  
To the herald,  
whose shrill notes awaken each peaceful slumber  
and pierce the quietude of the dawn.

But your methods are of grace and beauty:  
Early red glow  
changing delicately to the fierce yellow heat  
at noon.  
You have the power to create happiness  
Day after day,  
Causing faces throughout the world  
To smile in appreciation.

They say that pride comes  
Before a fall, which is true  
Even for one such as yourself  
As you give way to the night.  
But the fall  
Is as dramatic as the ascent.  
Once again the sky is aglow,  
As the heavenly body  
Is swallowed up behind the hills.  
It seems as though a fire  
Is raging at some distant place,  
Until its presence is no longer,  
Felt or seen,  
And a chill fills the air  
As people close their doors to the evening dusk.

But there can be no sense of loss  
When we know you will rise again,  
O phoenix of the sky.

Kitty and Alisoun

Legend of a Goodwif

A maid ther was of Portsmouth Towne  
Her name it was Teresa Browne.  
When that she was 18 years of age  
She was ensnared in mariage;  
A bouncer was he, ful big and strong  
And he nyl nat do her no wrong.  
They met at a place from here nat far  
Wher 'Grece' showeth at a cinema

This man, I gesse, was seldom herde -  
Like marked currency spent he ech worde;  
And whan that evere to speke he chese  
He mad ful many a wight ill at ese.  
He had faire legges two, so they telleth me  
Something of a churl, soothly for to seye:  
Amonges othere thyngs he hadde the name  
Of his loved one tattoed on his arme,  
And eke a lusty smyle he hadde  
Which mad many a maid right gladde.  
His body lacked fairnesse, with muscles large  
Hippes and posterior as wide as a barge.

Quod Teresa, in ful womanly voys:  
"It nedeth me to throw awa me toys -  
But I shall nat me fair body defile  
Bifor I have walked doon me aisle,  
In parfit chastitee I shall nat falter  
Til me housbounde pace with me from th'altar".  
Thus she spak, and mad his herte ful soore  
Although she had hir true love swoore.  
But bifor six months hadde run their course  
This lusty con had gained his force.  
A likerous man he proved to be  
But Teresa loved him in ech degree.

\* \* \*

Mist on the Mountains

It rolls up the mountain side tripping over  
itslef  
In a swirling mass  
Of ghostly grey,  
Stretching out wiry wisps  
Enveloping and eating all in its path.  
It utters no words,  
But it lives on them  
As it muffles even the loudest cries.  
It sends shivers through the very hearts  
Of men, beast and rock alike,  
As it blinds them  
With its callous cloud.  
And then it passes on:  
Thrown over the edge of a precipice  
Leaving a track of sparkling pure  
Water.

\* \* \*

Shirt-collar upturned, impressions of security  
Constructed carefully into his image  
Transmitting blotted signals to the empty-faced  
girl;

Her bright-eyed, bright-stoned companions  
Glitter slyly in their complacence  
She has a vacant finger; they are one.  
Hands clasped, they walk the mocking precinct -  
In the fashionable shops lie pieces of themselves  
and

Tower blocks stand tall in the night's black womb.  
Mutual instinct for the night's desperate games  
Sends sweaty signals from palm to palm; while  
Mutual confusion for an explanation  
Whirls in separate brains. Drink  
crashing through blank minds  
Crushes objections and smudges tomorrow  
Incongruity exists in frantic efforts  
to exchange futile details, resignation and  
Inevitability silence the staccato ping-pong.  
The tousled morning lends no help; she departs  
To the whirling, buzzing cogs that block her  
conscience,  
And he fits another fire for yesterdays pleasure.

\* \* \*

Gail Robson

Some Boys

Sixteen, good looking,  
I don't like television,  
Or my mother's nagging,  
So I go out.

Some boys don't like beer,  
I don't either,  
They drink beer,  
I drink what I like.

When I go out,  
I'm expected to dress,  
For some boys,  
Whilst they dress for themselves.

Because I'm a girl,  
Some boys desire things of me,  
They must have what they want,  
Whether or not I wish to give, or take.

I tell some boys,  
That I just don't want to know,  
Some boys laugh at me, or sneer,  
Some boys curse me, some drink, some  
smoke dope.

Some boys will never learn,  
Why should they?  
I'm learning, fast, the hard way.

\* \* \*

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