

POETRY QUARTER

An Embarrassment of riches – the spillover effect

We didn't have enough room in the January/February *Glebe Report*, the usual place for our Poetry Quarter, so we extended the deadline and moved to March.

Our theme, quite naturally, is spillover – holdover, boil over, mull over, pick over. And here we are with an embarrassment of riches – our cup runneth over with an eclectic mix of poetic expression!

The *Glebe Report's* Poetry Quarter is curated by poet, author and educator JC Sulzenko.



Wash

There stands an ancient Roman bathhouse down an English country lane, where for centuries the village folk have come to wash away their pain. In golden letters above arched entrance worn bricks bear the name, of a wily Roman warrior of most notorious fame. His great deeds and atrocities well do the locals see, etched upon the twisted limbs of each mangled family tree. The gold is pure, neither rust nor rot will ever dim its shine, but bricks and mortar are not so blessed and chip away with time. Each winter storm or rainy squall that batters these ancient walls might toss a letter to the dirt, left to lay wherever it falls. But in the bathhouse, the water is warm, the children laugh and play, and from the villagers the mud and grime slowly wash away

Adam Jarvis

Get over it

Flip over the phone to stop the alarm
Kiss the partner distractedly before jumping out of the bed
Have breakfast on the corner of the table
Pour over the news of the day
Look over yesterday's leftovers to prepare a quick lunch

At the office, briefing notes, meetings, reading and budget await you
Overheard that the team is getting bigger in the new year
Overheard that we may be asked to postpone vacation
Don't mull over all of this, just go through the day
That long list of miscellaneous things to do
Over, and over, and over again
It seems like Groundhog Day until the day we die

Sadly, you never knew how to bring to light the miracles of your days
These smallest details in every one and every thing that create delight
Like the thousands of leaves in the tree, when you open the curtains in the morning, that dance just for your eyes
Like the smell of the orange you peel at breakfast, awakening with its fresh bitter and sweet juice your palate right through your mind
Like the touch of your partner, his irresistible smile, the absurd joke he will invent just to hear your *Oh, idiot, just stop that* before you step out of the door
Like the taste of that *delizioso* coffee you buy at that niche coffee shop during your break time - you know you couldn't survive if that place were to stop selling this wonderful treat
Like the sound of your daughter laughing out loud when you call her at lunch time – that incomparable sound lifting your spirit and amplifying your joy with every laugh
And so so sooooo many other miracles in your day
If you could only get over it, all the petty annoyances of your days, and take over your life

Carole Tremblay

Spill Over, Mull Over, Pick Over

Thrifting is a craft
Spill over, mull over, pick over
Sorting finding choosing
Come on your favourite day
A way to be to find your way
For an event or finds for day to day
Spill over, mull over, pick over thrifting
Can't decide is always okay
You'll find what you need if not found today
Cloth, jewellery or holiday fare
To be fair, items with lightly used ware
Spill over, mull over, pick over

Colin Learn

Kindling

and so it begins – not with a conflagration
but with an insidious creep
tongues of flame lick the soft edge of the grassland
lovingly caress the dry blades
that shrivel and rub up against their neighbours
consuming a greater swath with each breath of wind
gusting over an endless expanse of fuel
grassland, forest, buildings all charred to ash

and so it begins – whispered rumours in the dark
fume, simmer, seethe, sting, bite
yearn for wider acceptance
assume authority though they have it not
corrode reality, inflame false facts
demonize the vulnerable with witch hunts
cremate a pyre of contrary concepts
sear their brand into our flesh

a miniscule spark is all it takes
to burn down forest or civilization
the fuel is always ready for the fire
the smoke signal arrives too late to prevent the blaze

Adrienne Stevenson

Figures of Speech

Low clouds fall into the river,
metal gun grey, fog.
Craggy island outcroppings,
fume at the edges
as if colonies of gull
still nested there.

The shoreline encrusted
with ice, sleep seeds
clustered on eyelids.
Further out, rapids rise
and fall, the chest
of an ailing patient.
On the horizon, the blur
of a steel bridge crosses
the heart of an island.

Skiers, their limbs pummelling
in sync, exhale wisps of froth,
give me a wide berth as they pass.
Their skis spread wide
are the arms of a singer,
chest, mouth resonate
with joy, with hope. This is
the metaphor I accept.

Blaine Marchand

Thor

Thor, Thor, you run so fast,
Sometimes I try to beat you, but you win the race.
When you gallop in the moonlight,
Sometimes I see two glowing eyes in a dark, dark, room.
And I run downstairs to tell my mum.
Sometimes you make me feel mad and grumpy,
But I still love you very much, no matter what.

Saffi Isabelle Fleming-Fontaine,

SK Mutchmor Public School as told to her mother

Notes from the Occupation

Trucker horns in our ears
shaking us to the core.
Now my wife hears a horn
every time that I snore.

Diesel fumes in the air
hanging over our bed.
If we never wake up, well,
we'll know why we're dead.

Have they nowhere to 'go'
when they're into the grog?
If they 'sprinkle' the snow
it confuses our dog.

I get swarmed in the street.
They pull off my mask.
"Is my freedom not freedom
to wear one?" I ask.

"God is with us!"
I can hear one declare.
God of the horns? Horns
you blare when at prayer?

While you soak in your tub
at the Parliament gate,
I'll be on the Canal.
Do you mind if we skate?

J. D. Finnerty

POETRY QUARTER JUNE 2022

THE POETRY OF FREEDOM

Freedom – it's not just another word. Write about freedom from fear, tyranny, violence, want. Freedom to live, love, speak. Freedom of thought, speech, association. Freedom with caveats, responsibilities, limits. Are you free for lunch? There's no free lunch! Explore freedom's dimensions from the personal to the global, from the practical to the spiritual.

Poets in the region are invited to send in their poems on the theme of freedom, any freedom, or its lack.

As usual, poems should be:

- Original and unpublished in any medium (no poems submitted elsewhere, please);
- No more than 30 lines each;
- On any aspect of the theme within the bounds of public discourse; and
- Submitted on or before Tuesday, May 24, 2022.

Poets in the National Capital Region of all ages welcome (school-age poets, please indicate your grade and school). Please send your entries (up to 5 poems that meet the criteria) to editor@glebereport.ca. Remember to send us your contact information and your grade and school if you are in school.

Deadline: Tuesday, May 24, 2022