



Walking with Bare Feet

Walking with bare feet
Across grass
Through mud
Will change your life

You will not be
The human picture
Nice and pretty
And high and empty

You will be
Unwrapped across grass
Cleaned through mud
The present of life

At once human
Animal
God
Grass

Living
Knowing
Loving
Growing

Alone
With every thing
No shoes please
In my church

Mary Clapp





Adultery

With heavy heart and heavy lids
He stepped into the flowerbed;
“Oh! how I long to be with you,
Away, away from this” he said.

“A world of brick and metal cells,
Of iron trees and steely eyes,
Where brick-laid hearts wait, start, stop, stop
For concrete wings of butterflies.

You Daffodils! You Worm, you Earth!
You are all that’s good and true.
I have never known before
Such beauty or such life as you.”

Silence. Then he saw the sky
And screamed and wept and begged and tore,
For his toenails pulled and stretched
His feet below the earthen floor.

He writhed and squirmed as he was forced
To fall towards his feet; he cried
For help, the flowers smiled, his voice
Was stolen as the wind arrived.

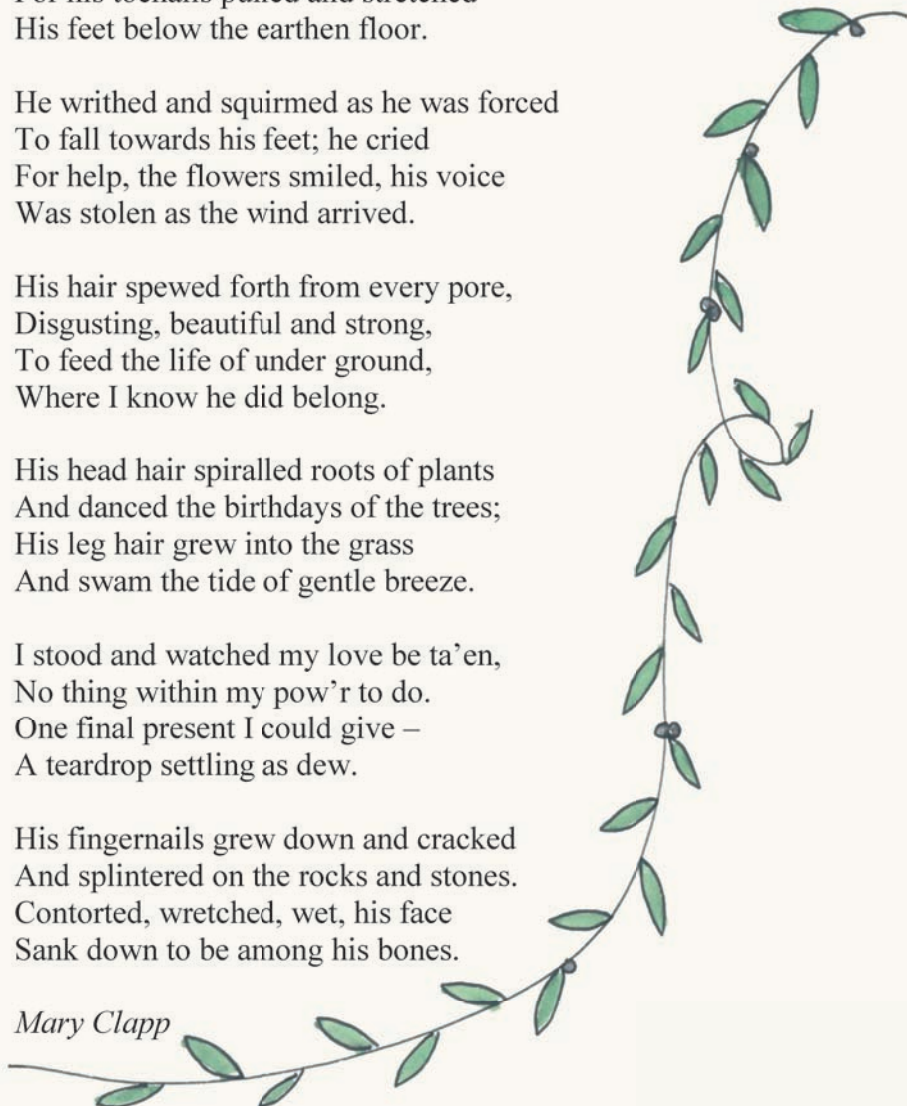
His hair spewed forth from every pore,
Disgusting, beautiful and strong,
To feed the life of under ground,
Where I know he did belong.

His head hair spiralled roots of plants
And danced the birthdays of the trees;
His leg hair grew into the grass
And swam the tide of gentle breeze.

I stood and watched my love be ta’en,
No thing within my pow’r to do.
One final present I could give –
A teardrop settling as dew.

His fingernails grew down and cracked
And splintered on the rocks and stones.
Contorted, wretched, wet, his face
Sank down to be among his bones.

Mary Clapp





Stupid Is Loud Now

Stupid is loud now -
It flings and buzzes
And pauses for applause or a cup of tea

And poetry is quiet.

It is a mother
Who promises with a whisper
That everything will be alright in the summer,

Before the middle class,
Middle aged, middle weighted,
Monsieur et Mademoiselle sit on her cold
child's face

To calm it all, and end it all,
Slowly, and quietly,
With a foul stench, and a loud belch of politi-
cal views.

It wasn't always this way;

The poet's larynx
Was in good shape
Until the microphone helped the singer belt it
louder,

And the poet's face
Was often painted
Before the television helped the politician say
it with a smile,

And the poet's eyes
Were always sought across a room
But the computer helped the spider's web trap
the eyes of everyone.

Mary Clapp



Crow

A black handkerchief
Blew across a fertile
Wasteland, green with envy
At the crow's flight

Why do you tempt me?
Tickle prickles of blades
Of blades of stodgy grass, starched
With your paper cut wings?

A child could draw you in
One line, the pencil
Never leaving the page
And finished

You'd fly, a walk on air
Cold and cruel as a blanket
Smothering your mocking cry

Serena Brett

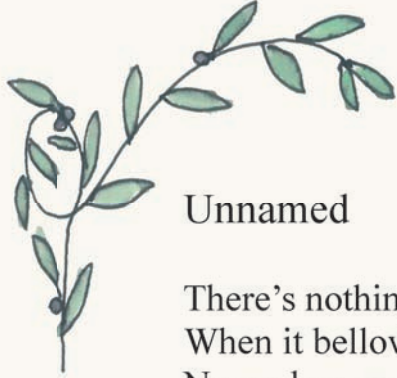


Fired

She mothballed home that day
"No spring chicken"
Clutching her treasure trove
Of desk lamps and sticky notes that had
No stick but said
Meaningful things like
"Finish report due Tuesday"
An eerie breeze
Plaited her hair with lies
A gross reassurance
Smiley faces crossed out with
The marker pen that had
Marked her life, numbering days
As the greedy clock on the wall
Clutched his knife and fork
And, salivating,
Began gobbling time

Serena Brett

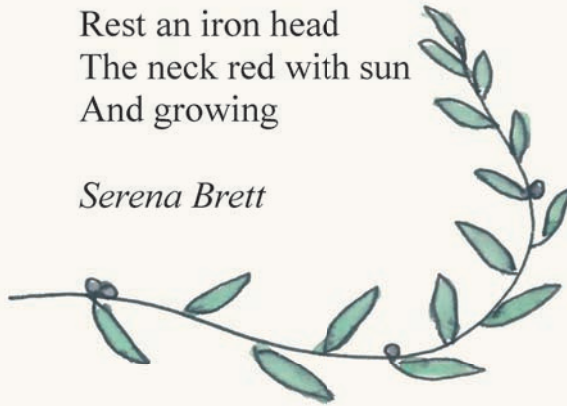


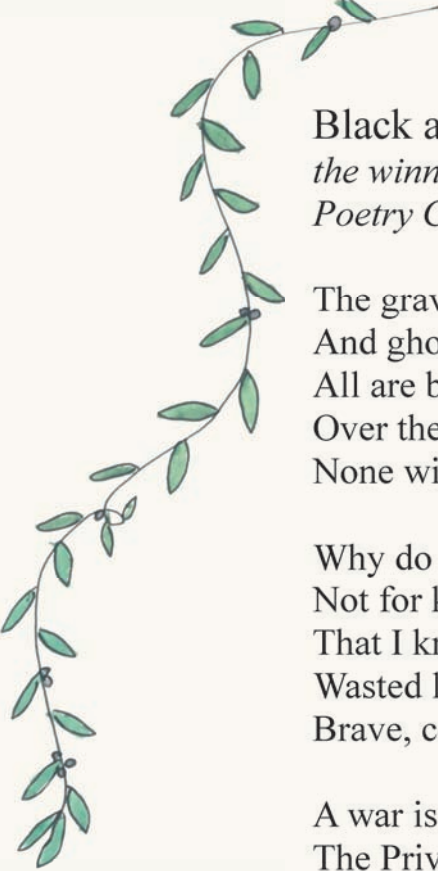


Unnamed

There's nothing more than a word
When it bellows and sways
No anchor, mast blast
On clouds of waves
Subverted as though
No one would know
But the beating, beating
Of fingers on tables
On chairs in libraries, shops
And chops of sweet, fresh conversation
Blooms
Eager snow drops at the
End of a stark book
Harsh, abrupt, the ending
Never quite the right
Pillow on which to
Rest an iron head
The neck red with sun
And growing

Serena Brett





Black and White or Shades of Grey

the winning poem of the History Department's Block 3 Battlefields Trip Poetry Competition 2011

The graves are weathered
And ghostly white
All are bathed in a creamy light
Over there the graves are black.
None will ever come marching back

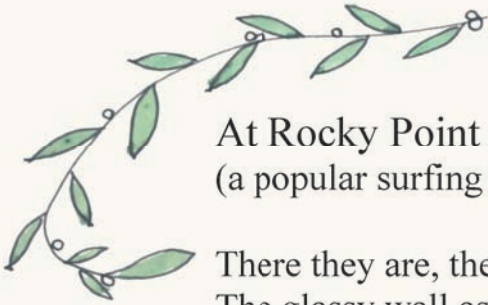
Why do we honour some soldiers so?
Not for killing
That I know.
Wasted lives of friend and foe.
Brave, courageous they died alone

A war is not fought by a single man
The Private does
Not make the plan.
My generation would like to feel
All can be forgiven
That time can heal

We can honour all the soldiers so
For they were brave
That I know.
If you saw how these men died
Perhaps these differences
Could be put aside.

Juliette Perry

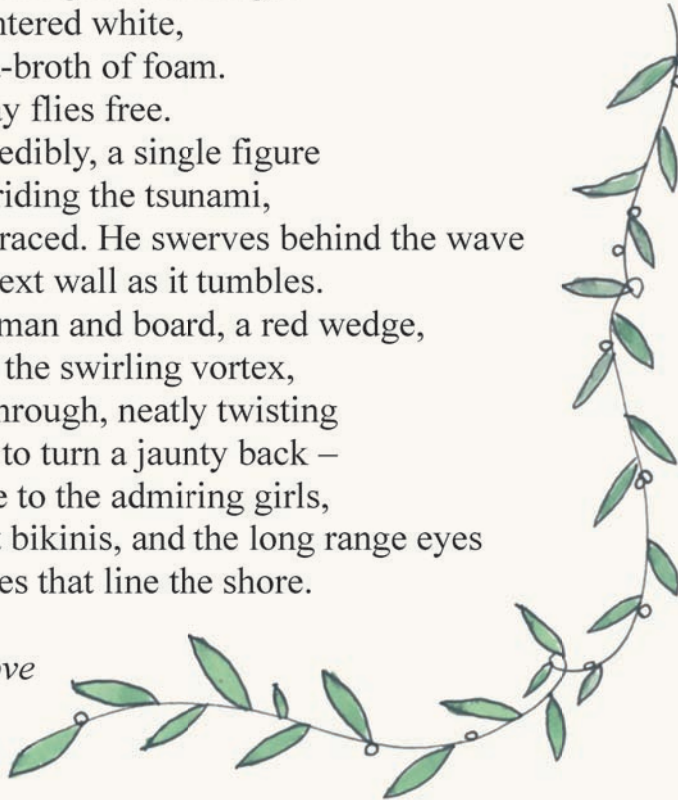


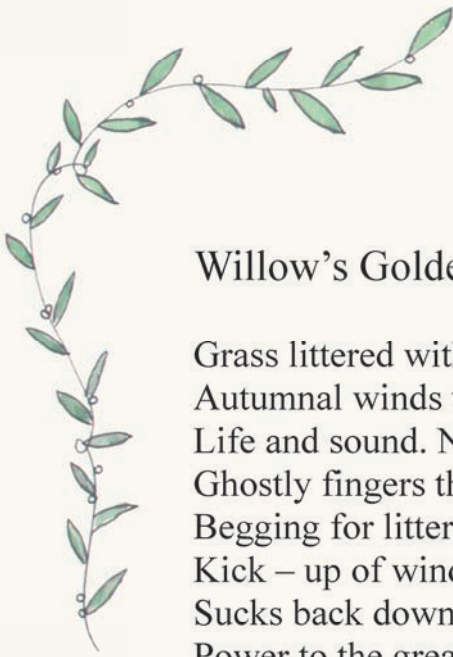


At Rocky Point
(a popular surfing beach in Hawai'i)

There they are, the matchstick men, silhouetted against
The glassy wall as it crumbles.
They slide and glide along its unravelling edge
Or are flung like seals by its killer force.
Again the grey and glaucous height
Shatters to splintered white,
Boiling in a sea-broth of foam.
A fringe of spray flies free.
Topping it, incredibly, a single figure
Strong, proud, riding the tsunami,
His red board braced. He swerves behind the wave
Ready for the next wall as it tumbles.
Now, together, man and board, a red wedge,
He tunnels into the swirling vortex,
Sails serenely through, neatly twisting
In the shallows to turn a jaunty back –
Indifferent alike to the admiring girls,
Plump in bright bikinis, and the long range eyes
Of waiting lenses that line the shore.

Diana Wallsgrove





Willow's Golden Streamers

Grass littered with willow's golden streamers.
Autumnal winds take from helpless trees both
Life and sound. Now the wind blows through grasping
Ghostly fingers that scream silently in the night
Begging for littered leaves, taunted by the
Kick – up of wind that brings life closer but
Sucks back down to ground the force that gives green
Power to the great grey ones of lawn life
Who creek and watch eternally. Old boughs
Of grey wisdom that ring around time like
The hands on a clock skipping through seconds
That mean nothing in a lifetime of a
Giant like this. Spacious enough for shadows
To stretch across and hide behind the next.

Elliott Hills

