



**My song is
perfume**

An anthology of poetry

Rosalie J Saunders

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My song is perfume—an anthology of poetry

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Typeset in 28-, 18- and 10-point Iowan Old Style BT Pro.

Version 1.0.0—Saturday 25 March 2023

View from the Potting Shed Publications, Potting Shed Books
Imprint: Lulu.com

ISBN: 978-1-4477-7994-0

<https://www.garethjmsaunders.co.uk/books>

For Keith John Saunders

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“True friends are never apart,
Perhaps in distance but never in heart!”

—Helen Keller

INTRODUCTION

This book of poetry is the second volume of writings that I have compiled and edited from the nine-hundred or more pages of writings that I found on Mum's laptop after her death in August 2020. The first volume was her autobiography *Rosalie: in her own words* (2022), the next volume will be a collection of the very many short stories and other creative writings that she penned. Nestled between is this short book of poetry.

While there may be more, undiscovered, handwritten poems among Mum's journals and other notebooks, I have constrained this anthology to the thirty-two poems written during the 2000s or which she typed, presumably, for a creative writing class.

In a short article Mum wrote about her interest and influences in writing she mentioned how T.S. Eliot, R.S. Thomas, Will H. Ogilvie, and Kahlil Gibran's poetry spoke to her heart. It was through Mum's interest in these artists of the written word that my own love of the works of the Lebanese American writer, poet and visual artist Kahlil Gibran (1883–1931) and Welsh priest and poet R.S. Thomas (1913–2000) in particular grew, and her anthologies of their work that I inherited.

The Reverend Ronald Stuart Thomas's works were rooted deeply in the Welsh landscape and people, often heavy with political and spiritual nuance. In Thomas's poetry we often find a bleakness and raw emotion that draws us deep into the mystery of what it means to be human. There is something of this honesty and vulnerability that can be found in Mum's poetry, particularly those that spoke about pain and suffering. She also echoed Thomas's love of the landscape, although in Mum's case that of the verdant hills of the Scottish Borders in which she was born (and home too of another favourite poet, Will H. Ogilvie), and which called her back home from the arid foothills of the Western Ghats in India.

Having lived (and nearly died) and worked in India for four years, it is perhaps unsurprising that Mum listed T.S. Eliot among her influences. In her biography of one of the 20th century's major poets, Cleo McNelly Kearns noted that T.S. Eliot was deeply influenced by both Indic traditions and religion. Hinduism, she claimed, formed the foundation for his philosophy and thought processes and in particular the Upanishads (the late Vedic Sanskrit texts that form the basis of later Hindu philosophy), a copy of which was found among Mum's books after she died.

Some of Mum's poems were written as academic exercises for one creative writing course or another, others were written from the heart during some of the most painful moments of Mum's life, following the loss of her husband to three brain haemorrhages and dementia and the subsequent financial and personal and family crises that followed.

The book's title also comes from the poem, "My song for My Saviour". Mum often spoke about how she would experience the presence of God as a scent, particularly in moments of darkness. Many memories of her

childhood in Malaya and work in India were wrapped up in the perfumes of native flowers and trees, and one of her great luxuries was the perfume Mitsouko by Guerlain. “My song is perfume” seemed apt.

I have arranged these poems into four sections, each named after lines from the same poem. The first section, “My song is my brokenness”, gathers eight poems where you can almost feel the pain and anguish. This is offset by the second section, “My song is hope in the darkness”, which explores the love of God and faith that sustained and gave hope to Mum throughout her life. In the third section, “My song is blueness, sapphires and the sun”, Mum leads us on a journey through the landscape that helped shape her life, the Border hills and rivers and beyond. The final section, “My song is ribbons of rainbow hue”, contains her remaining poems that draw attention to the ordinary made extraordinary.

Gareth J M Saunders
Crail
Saturday 25 March 2023

**I. MY SONG IS
MY BROKENNESS**

Ache

The rawness of loss
longing to be held
loved.

hugged by the wind
kissed by the rain
loved.

shushed by the sea
warmed by the sun
loved.

awed by the stars
held by the night
loved.

Bereft

Flung like a lobster into boiling water
screams absorbed, unheeded, unchecked till dead.
Or flotsam on the sea, drifting with the tide
pale, shrunk, dumped, to be dried out
and burnt, annihilated, ashes, dust to dust.
Bloated blubber, beached on sharp shingle
the stench attractive only to flies and carrion.
“Level the mountains.” I fall from the precipice
a million miles in the blackness,
shattered on the jaggedness of my own pride.
I am cut down like a tree,
planed by the Carpenter.
Battered by the hammer shaped but useless.
Thrown on the scrapheap, unwanted, inert.
“You are my Rock.” I have no strength to cling.
My boat takes in water, and I am sinking.
Let me slip beneath the dark waters,
engulfed in my tears of self-pity – failed.
Where are you, Lord? I need your hug. Hold me.
Listening,
I drown in the silence.

Comfort

He sits apart like a tailor's dummy
black and white, cheeks like Aunt Sal,
wooden, yet speaks.
Some words of comfort
fall in the rift between us
or float like bubbles in the air
to touch others with refreshment.
The pain is red,
the rawness sears my being.
My chest is clamped, tight.
I cannot breathe.
Tears unshed stuff my skin.
My voice shrunk does not cross the chasm.
Hands meet but do not touch.
Eyes communicate the caring.
Prayer pervades like frankincense.

How long?

How long?

How long has this to be?

How long am I to be consumed by this –

this pain,

this loss,

this separation?

How long am I to be drawn,

day by day,

minute by painful minute,

to its dreadful happening?

How long to weep,

and know that weeping as a constant companion?

How long, my God, how long?

How often has this to be?

How often am I to be reminded

of this parting,

when I do not want to be,

I do not expect to be?

How often will a look

a smell

a sound

drag me back to look

and to know again the pain?

How often, my God, how often?

How unfair has this to be?

How unfair to lose him now,

when so much was promised,

planned,

expected,
when so much was done to share and love,
believing it could last and last?
How unfair
to see no more the light and shade of living
but only that one dark place
where all was lost
in your departing?
How unfair, my God, how unfair?

Love sings

For 36 years I had been a carer by profession, but nothing had prepared me for the 15 years of the 24 hours, 7 days a week role as carer of my husband.

Soft brown, smelly faeces, warm
on my feet, the floor, the seat.
Uncomprehending impatience
shouts, unsteady. Bare bum
to be washed, creamed, powdered, clean.
Pants up, ironed pyjamas straight
He lurches bedward, guided by
a touch of love.

The watch and water, bell and specs
placed within reach, lamp,
alarm on call. Crablike, awkward
metamorphosed beached whale swings
helpless on a sea of sheets.
Marble feet on wooden box, encouraged
engages mind to push where
pillows form a nest.

Within this shell my husband lives.
My hands caress his feet, anointing
swollen legs, decaying skin.
Cosy bedclothes, heaviness tucked in.
We read a psalm and pray.
Limp hand lies derelict, uncharged.
He smiles, eyes shut, a kiss,
hearing aid removed, asleep.

Damp towels on rail, wipe, rinse,
wring out, renew, put right,
switch on, airfresh.

Wet smoking pad in plastic bag
fling in the bin outside.

The stars brilliant in the blackness
enveloped in the cosmos, breathe.
Leaves rustle softly in the wind.

Love sings.

Macular degeneration

Each scene a hall of mirrors
Distorted images, flickering, fuzzy
The shutters shift and snap
Alien monsters shop and nod
Eyes and smiles lie hidden in a blur.
Coconut heads grow elephant noses,
enlarge and disappear, leaving
the street filled with headless ghosts.
Bright light pierces through the shadows
Behind the pupils pain hammers hard.
Letters, and numbers tumble into oblivion.
Keyholes, sockets , zips, present as puzzles
Cars, buses, bikes dissolve in the tarmac
Wet leaves, strewn branches obstruct the path
But sunlight touches my face and a caring hand
And a kindly voice lifts my spirits
The scent of roses enfolds me. I am blessed.

Pain

Pain

short, namby-pamby word
tinge of discomfort, respectable,
fleeting recoil from burning stove
passive and innocuous
tolerable, even a friend?

Where from this rack?
unrelenting, engulfed in the rawness
entombed in the furnace
clawing like a cancer
surrendered in the silence
marooned in the loneliness.

So shattered, disintegrated
bound in barbed wire
blackness and redness
no breath to scream.

Wealth

The wife wears gold
rich metal glints on bronzed skin
warmed by holidays in the sun.
Pale gold, red gold, chains,
bracelets, earrings, rings,
opulent precious stones,
symbols of a husband's love
display of wealth and pride.

But my gold is in the autumn leaves
the yellow flowers of spring;
hot lentil soup and crusty loaves;
water touched by the sun.

My gold is in the rays of dawn
the brilliance of life's noon;
the glory of the sunset;
the paleness of the moon.

My gold is in my children's smiles
and the richness of their hugs;
the memories of their Father
and friends who do not judge.

May their gold have been a childhood
flecked with laughter and with fun;
trust in the Christ to lead their way
enfolded by his love.

My neck is bare.
My skin is old, wrinkled like a prune.
Yet I am rich when I perceive
my many strands of gold.

II. MY SONG IS HOPE IN THE DARKNESS

A journeying in the love of God

What faith?

Slunged into the bleakness and the blackness
of sheer despair – enveloped in the starkness;
hurtling through the jagged darkness
of the abyss, a million miles away,
desolate – smothered in the scream.

Or again, running
through the splintered rain, confidence shattered.
Blindly seeking annihilation under the murky water,
as sere as an autumn leaf,
hurled in the maelstrom
of no consequence.

Abandoned? Forever?
The inner emptiness, label of no validity.
Haunted by fears – historic liability
memories of hurts and open hostility,
deserving of reproach – rejected,
drowned in doubt.

Compassionate
Covenant – “My treasures in darkness”.
gems from the desert; secret riches in the vastness.
A garment of hope to dry away tears.
Redeemed from oblivion.
God’s Name is Mercy.

Accepting
His embrace, fragrant from resurrection,
empowering my inadequacies, forgiving my defection,
through the Holy Mystery
restores He my sanity
wounded to heal.

A kaleidoscope of consolation

You bade me welcome – God with skin on.
You prepared a table for me –
a banquet of bananas, bread, butter and strawberries...
You cosseted me like a child –
placated with hot chocolate and swirly ice cream,
a pale blue nest of clouds and pastel rainbows
in which to sleep.

Your prayer room was a balm – Narnia in summer.
The energy of your love began
to melt the icy splinters in my heart.
My darkness like ink flooded
into the pools of your understanding.
Like sunlight dappling on water
you made crystal some of the shadows.

You sent a counsellor, Kate who hears,
beautiful as an emerald, serene and wise,
bearing the fragrance of your presence.
You took my hand, showed me
faces of Edinburgh I'd never seen before.
I saw how you loved them all, Lord, and
how they responded to your smile.

You drowned me in beauty,
buttercups, daisies, botanic orchids and palm trees;
birch trees whispering in the breeze;
the ripple of the burn; butterflies, bees.
In your quietness and trust, I walked – miles!

You showered me with gifts –
a rosary, a rainbow, new raiment blue,
messages from friends,
mown grass,
bird's feather,
kittens born.

You gave me Sisters, silent, spiritual, sensuous.
You put your song in my heart –
shell pink pearl in dark waters.
I looked at You – You smiled – You shushed me with “I am.”
You showed me dreams;
another world; where cellos played;
and images of staretz
encountered an angel with a sword.
You touched me with incense –
my prayers became perfume.

My repentance and heaviness poured out like a torrent.
The purity of your presence was almost like poison.
I cried out in terror, for fear I should be lost in the scream.
You held me – close!
You caressed me with the wind,
swirled confetti leaves in my hair.
Lord, I listened. Dark Icon Christ – I know You are God.

In obedience I accept your joy,
your oils of gladness, your garment of praise
without the comfort of feeling them.
In obedience I accept your gifts
of wisdom and discernment. The “Prophet” speaks.
May the heavenly flower of Acceptance
with Joy, grow in my heart

that I may bear with Love,
all that lies before,
in my home and in my workplace.

May I bring your voice with the songs of the morning
your laughter and love in my eyes
and your hands as soft and strong as a swan's wing.

Out of darkness – Light shines.

Written on an Ignatian retreat
at Nile Grove, Edinburgh

God give me peace

Often February 13th has been a difficult day in my life.

Remember February 13th, when I cried to die...

...deaf to the One who said 'It is I'.

Broken hearted, crushed spirit, needing calm.

Sweet chime of bells, gaunt cathedral here –

Darkness – no fear –

The song of the river – rushing – near

Blackness – vastness – stars afar

Cottage windows gleam , a door ajar.

Is that how you are, O God, my Lord,

Almighty Creator, Eternal Word,

Peace in the storm, the Hope of man?

Holy Heavenly Father, you called me by name?

The breeze caresses like a Lover's kiss.

I scent the fragrance of your loveliness,

My Dearest Lord.

Burned by your brilliance in this black night

the radiance of reason departs from sight.

Gifts I would offer, gems I have none

but pearls of sorrow, heavy the sum

of debts and deep-set fears.

God grant me peace.

Would that I could empty the alabaster jar

Wash your feet with my tears, dry with my hair

for I love you Lord!

My sins are the world's

The Gaza strip – no job – alone!

'Hush, My Daughter, my dear, accept Shalom'.

Almost I drown in the torrent of your love
In the darkness, saturated, I have
Your Peace.

Written on retreat
at Scottish Churches House, Dunblane
sometime in the 1980s

Love

“I wait for you, my child,
I desire your love
More than anything else you can give me.
Not your service,
Not your struggling and trying to please me
Or to please others.
I want you to love me;
to love me with all your heart,
mind, soul and strength.
This is the first commandment
And matters more than all else besides.
I need your love, fellowship, devotion and worship,
I want you to be single-minded in this one thing.
My spirit is with you
to empower you,
to fill your heart with love.
I desire this not sometimes, but always.”

Muy nada y todo

Contemplation in Avila, Spain

Drawn into the darkness, Icon of Christ.

“Who are you looking for?”

“I seek you, Lord”

“What do you want?”

“I want to have removed the anvil in my heart.

I am tired. Searching with leaden arm

my weary weight reeks failure and enough.”

Scooped up I nestle foetal like.

The basket lined with feathers.

Securely held, transported over many waters.

Lulled I sleep.

Till plummeting through the pearl grey skies

we touch the pale green ocean

descending through dark depths

not overcome, not even wet,

where coal black horses, opal manes afire

prance and dance. In the green shadows,

steeds, their coats the sheen of starlings' wings

toss manes of snow, whinnying, a welcome.

Pale sunshine breaks through the music of the waves.

The Phaedros exterior and interior meet.

Refreshment and joy in the nothing and everything.

My song for My Saviour

*“My song is love unknown. My Saviour’s Love to me
Love to the loveless shown that they might lovely be.”*

“All that I have comes from you — of your own I give unto you.”

My song is flowers of every colour,
 harebells, hyacinth, roses, orchids.

My song is perfume, sandalwood, samsara, pine
 green feathers of larch, chestnut candles, lime.

My song is a field mouse, my old cat’s purr,
 parakeets, monkeys, frogs’ eyes of amber.

My song is the sky awash with pink.

My song is dishes piled high in the sink.

My song is tears, raw wounds and pain,
 potatoes, rhubarb, and the thunder of rain.

My song is Kashmir, snow, lotus, chinar
 Jalna wells, bullock carts, saris, sitars.

My song is the city, architecture, the Queen
 cardboard box houses, meths, drugs, the Aids scene.

My song is holding the hand of the dying.

My song is delivering the new-born crying.

My song is bright satin ribbons of rainbow hue
 hope in the darkness, reminiscent of you.

My song is a boy child, died before living.
 a marriage, for better, for worse, loving and giving.

My song is blueness, sapphires, the sun,
 pearls, and pebbles smooth from the burn.

My song is your shield to scoop up abuse.

My song is my brokenness, displayed for your use.

My song is washing, fresh in the wind;
 water and lavender; the honeybees' sound.
My song is bare branches, pruned for fruit,
 heartbreak and anger, volcanic soot.
My song is the clearing of faeces and vomit;
 hugs from our children; I thank you for it.
My song is unpolished, unfinished too
but the essence of it all, is my love for you.

Towards the source

The path leads upward, sandy red
Spring green larch fronds fringe overhead.
The air is fresh. A cool breeze
caresses my cheek – dispels unease –
ruffles the cocoon of sea-green shawl
womb warmth; heaven and earth touch; the wall
of fear crumbles. Bruised spirit slowly breathes.
The knowe is reached. Tall guardian trees
enfold the Temple of Silence.

Barefoot toes uncurl on damp vernal moss.
Set aside on entering, darkness and the loss
of deep set hopes and dreams.
Through open portal veiled force streams.
Reborn into the Living Silence with giant creatures might
in the fragrance, worship the Mystery, Source of Light.
Quasar droplets spray my naked face
awed by the aura of this place,
the cloak is cast, before the Holy Energy.

A cosmic rain approving, magnets me, a succinct
ecstasy, seared by Love, yet not made extinct.
The eternal silence sings. Touched, I hear,
Smelted, lost in the discovery that I am dear
enfolded in the Passion of the Living One.
Wordless, yet a world of communication done
I step out from Primal Light to April sunshine.
Deafened by birdsong, drunk, but not with wine,
I descend – refreshed – Me!

**III. MY SONG IS
BLUENESS, SAPPHIRES
& THE SUN**

A yearning

Beloved are my Border hills, and mists o' greys and silver,
wi' black-faced ewes by tumblin' burns
and winds that baith whisper and thunder.
Sparrowhawks, skylarks flutter high in the sky
whilst otters swim sleek in the river.
But now and then, my hert aches and yearns
for the sounds and the sights o' the sea.

Rivulets of lace lapping gently on Spittal sands
or the green skeins of water slapping Eyemouth boats.
Harbour seals plopping and popping foraging for fish.
Herring gulls screaming, swooping, protesting,
perching precariously on smooth shoogly waves
till the wind from the Arctic tosses up the white horses
and the corrugated current wildly races in the tide,
lashing and crashing and abusing the black rocks
with a gigantic flourish and crescendo of foam.

I breathe in the air, pure, exhilarated, afraid, overcome,
by the music of the sea...
But the moon calls out and the waters recede,
exposing the ocean's treasures,
washed shells and pebbles, a scuttling crab,
tangles of seaweed, and driftwood.
Oh, where did you come from
and to where are you going,
moving, mighty waters?

May I also voyage afar
to lands of adventure and fun?

But when the magical, mysterious, and strange
have answered my yearning to get up and go...
Swiftly bring me back to my Borderland
and the familiar places and friends I know.

Earth

Polaric and volcanic, Land of ice and fire
dense and magnetic, third follower of the Sun
planet of the universe, mountains majestic
source of many oceans, tides guarded by pale moon
wild winds carouse the desert, caress the gentle hills
with garlands green, to nourish man and creature
and in the commonplace organic soil
frail flowers sing
Jord, Gaia, Eorda, Earth
My Home.

Midsummer

Midsummer! Vertex of the year
Ukko's Celebration
Litha, Beltane, and Baptist John
Solstice fires and golden flowers
Dance away the Dragon

Facet of Iona

Dark greenness and blackness
thunder of water
towering and smashing
clashing on rocks

overwhelmed by the clamour
soaked in the majesty
awed by the oceans'
rhythm of centuries
Alpha to Columba, Christ's
sough of the tide

enveloped in the wideness
the grace of the whiteness
touch stillness in the turmoil

protected by the Father
warm down of the Mother
sheltered featherless bird
rests near the cliff top

blind but can see.

Freedom

The air was icy.
Whiteness all around.

Landscape by Ettrick Water

Stane brig astride wild water. Devoured
by sound, consumed within the mystery
of the river's awesome roar. The flood
hysterical, churns cappuccino, the residue
of ridges, reivered, raped, hurled
in spate towards the sea.

Contrast the hush of pathways. Haphazard
bramble and briars sprawl, winter weary,
entangle black rosehips, shrivelled remnant
of the Fall. Cocooned, Spring's secrets gesticulate
from trees, stark skeletons, creaking and bowing
where manes of yellow grasses sing.

A lurcher runs, nose down, disturbs
the mud. Snowdrops, March favours, splash
the bank. Suddenly eclipsed, slow and sinister
a Hercules thrums low, enveloping the glen.
Sheep in bye, swelled with lamb
crunch turnips, ignore the drone.

Cobs, thick coated, spiked with mud,
crop, startled, shy. Ducks scatter, hug,
the margin. Calmer, wide and deep the waters'
treasure in the darkness, silver fish.
Whilst straggly crows, macabre clowns, hop
sideways, spear putrid flesh, poacher's spoil.

Bolts of sleet, icy cold, stabs through
the sky's grey folds, drooped like
dirty washing. Riddled, disgorged, pillowfuls
of snowflakes skitter mothlike, whirl
suicidal to kiss the river's fire,
primed to assuage the thirst of summer.

Mertoun

Wake up! the West Wind whispered
teasing the pine trees to a gentle dance
where tall silver birch shout to catch the sun
and scrunched beech leaves and nuts
last year's birth sprinkle the velvet path
cocooned tight buds strain to unfurl
splashes of yellow daffodils nod
butterfly winged poised for flight
patches of pink currant foil green shields
a cacophony of birdsong – shrill – raucous – sweet
ducks teal necked shatter high branches
Labradors, chocolate black coats gleaming
investigate new smells perfume of
ploughed fields in the distance narcissi nearby
ravished earth and rabbits' dottles
diamonds in the river laugh
brown ripples in the burn reply
the wind ruffles the winter grass
and wakes the green of spring

Sheep tracks

I follow the tracks of the sheep. They rest at the top of the hill.
The path ascends – a gentle slope, not steep.
Skies, grey curtains, splatter huge droplets, wet my face.
Trees, wraith-some, sway and creak in the howling wind.
Leaves, sodden, like remnants of a window cleaner's chamois
Cling their last to the branches – a morbid race,
Hurled for recycling into the muddy morass beneath,
Dying to live.

Garments bedraggled, the cold spears
 through the loosely woven wool.
Water streaks in rivulets along the fringes,
Rapidly staining blue beryl to the uniform drabness.
Ewe paced, I plod uphill with sturdy sole.
Disturbing the autumn almost winter smell of earth and pine,
exhilaration and exhaustion.

Wide winged, a bird disturbed, flaps to a higher, safer perch.
The undergrowth rustles, a shrew scuttles to a drier hide.
At the summit of the knowe – a pause – shivering before the gale.
For the breach between the guardian trees, I search
And step into a different dimension...
I pass.

Ahead, a glade, no rain, the fragrance of lilies a balm.
Sparkling, cascading down, a waterfall, crystal clear.
In the lower reaches, a doe drinks steadily.
Our eyes meet – no fear – a sense of calm.
Soaked without, yet parched within, I desperately imbibe,
Refreshing and renewing.

Discarding dank dress, I leap into the living waters,
Laughing with joy. The streaming torrent assails.
Time stops. Toes uncurl from stone to sand to velvet moss.
Clothes warm and dry, scented with camomile.
Aware of huge creatures, present, but not seen.
A reassuring company, they serve a feast;
fresh bread, and cheese, honey, a flagon of rose wine.
I dine.

The river plays the music of Shalom.
Above the fall, a rainbow brightness shines.
Replete, I dwell in the shelter of the Most High.
In the shadow of the Almighty I rest.
Pulling the shawl around my head,
I sleep.

Faldonside
4 November 1991

**IV. MY SONG IS
RIBBONS OF RAINBOW HUE**

The brooch

Who is this woman,
distressed, alone – trapped?
Loved from afar, the wind
ruffles her veil.
She gazes west.
The water laps molten moonlight
messages from her absent son.
For Mercury, patiently she waits.

Cathy's keys

Metal forged and formed
forgotten ore
inert lifeless cast down mislaid
secrete some special
'Open sesame'
shout belongings, belonging
Welcome home!

Grey

My ideas

ash

battleship

charcoal

cloudy

cobweb

dapple

dove

drumlie (Scots)

dusty

granite

grizzled

gunmetal

gunsmoke

hoary

pearl

pewter

silver

slate

steel

washed in the potty

—dried in the lum!

Looked up

chrome

dusky

elephant

feldspar

foggy

graphite

gris

liard

misty

pebble

shady

shadow

shady

tin

twilight

Haiku

Grey, dreich, stinging sleet.
People, traffic hurrying.
Stop! Snowdrop smiles spring.

Lucy

A heap of fur coiled on a cushion
such softness the colour of clotted cream
Pink nose pink tongue protruding, purring
in and out the rhythmic breathing steady slow
warm relaxed no rush – plush
a Persian puss asleep – content

Sunlight casts golden glints
paw whiskers twitch lip curls
chintery she dreams of mice and birds
or chasing leaves. A languid stretch
full length upon her back oblivious
to all sounds – dormant

The fridge door opens
one amber eye
is instantly alert
twining round my ankles
entreating
Lucy with a winsome plaintive miaow!

Music

The kettle sings the water ready
for the first coffee of the day.
Squabble, scratch, grey wings aflutter
pecking birds gobble poured out grain.
A weary wind sighs, trills down leaves
a tumble of russet red and gold.
I crunch my toast whilst a radio hums
and papers rustle the daily news
Fed plush puss purrs rhythmic content.
common-place sounds
The Music of the Everyday.

The painting on Maggie's wall

Blueness and turquoise
Wraiths on ropes;
figures form dancing pictures
through the cool colours.
Lightness beckoning
flying through the vista
balancing brightness
cooling the goldness
icing the heat
restrained exuberant exercise
art magical
contained yet uncontrolled
climb upwards, dive downwards
sapphired centre
whiteness gold flecked
painted parable
poised poetry

Sculptures in Lesley May's garden

Figures swathed
images in stone
carved, curved, bound
blended to the beauty
awaiting to emerge
silent foetal membranes
listening to the birdsong.

Shoes

Free and barefoot but blue and cold
British babies' feet need covering
From woolly bootees made with care
To Start-rite shoes for school
Cute plastic wellies for the puddles
Clarks' sandals for the summer
Or flip flops for the sand
Girls' ballet pumps with satin ribbons
Studded boots for boys
Hunters green or muddy black
For workers on the farm
Steel toe caps for the scaffolders
Special soles for golf and bowls
Flippers for the frogmen whilst
Skaters cut the ice and
Weighted boots l deep dive
Trainers aid the athletes
And slippers soothe the pain
Wedge and kitten to peerie heels
Totter down the street
Whilst models sway the cat walk
Policemen pound the beat
to swollen feet, and bunion feet
to off one's feet
then bare feet in the coffin.
Free.

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