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original watercolour by Douglas Pugh

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## **From The Editors**

What is poetry? Is it merely a collection of words about places, people, events; emotions, feelings, ideas?

Imagine there is a tube on the table in front of a group of your friends. Some of them will see just a tube – nothing but a cylindrical, hollow space. Others, though, will be brave enough to pick it up, peer through one end and see that is filled with mirrors, beads and coloured glass – a kaleidoscope of crystal, pattern, light.

This is a poet's job. A poet writes in the hopes that a reader or two will be tempted to look just a little bit closer.

Each and every poet is unique. Poets form a kaleidoscope of talent, providing something for everyone. And that is what you will find in this collection. There is new and there is experienced. There is the sentimental, the quirky and the bizarre.

Issue Three of TheRightEyedDeer contains talented work from across three continents ... from the Mile High City to Down Under. From the Scottish Highlands to the coasts.

Shining for you. Enjoy!

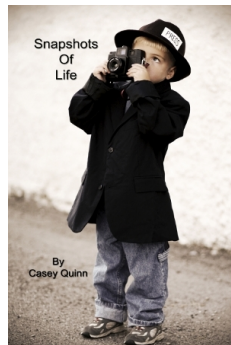
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Doug Pugh

Donna Gagnon Pugh

## TheDeer talks to poet Casey Quinn

### “Snapshots of Life”



<http://www.salvatorepublishing.com/book.php?id=9>

**Hi, Casey. I know you're a poet ... your book “Snapshots of Life” has just been published ... but before we talk about the work, can you tell me a bit about yourself? Do you do anything other than write poetry?**

Unfortunately, writing poetry buys coffee and does not pay the bills. So, yes, I do other stuff. I work at a large bank in the US, am happily married and I'm the owner of an old house that always seems to need maintenance. As I reply, I can hear my kitchen sink dripping .... I do a good deal of reading in my free time and try to alternate between fiction and poetry books, though lately, it has been more poetry than prose. I have two dogs, an old car, a well used barbeque and am located in Charlotte, North Carolina.

**None of the poems in your book (with the exception of one repeated word) use capital letters. I'm assuming this was a deliberate choice. Did this arise from a subliminal desire to focus more on the messages in your poems rather than on convention?**

Pretty much. I have found that too many people focus on form or punctuation versus the actual meaning or content of the poem. They try to make it look pretty or follow a strict structure or pattern but at the cost of quality and interesting content. I decided to keep it simple ... just lower case everything and strip out as much punctuation as I could to keep the focus on the words and what I wanted to say.

**I notice that though you obviously prefer free verse as opposed to form poetry, there is a consistent shortness of line length and sometimes a skeleton of structure beneath each piece, as if it were intended for perhaps a live reading or something. Am I right?**

You are right on! I don't have a specific structure in place for any poems other than I just add breaks where I naturally would pause when I read it back out loud. At times, I will add additional breaks if I really want to emphasis something but overall I just try to identify natural breaks in my reading and apply breaks. Again, keeps it simple.

**There is an underlying feeling in many of your poems of a sense of loss of things possibly seen as old fashioned and traditional. Family values ... perhaps even God. Is this your poet's way of protesting the direction that the world has been taking lately? Do you hope that this book will change someone's life perhaps or change their perspectives?**

I do feel a loss of the values of the good old days in our society. We live now in a buffet-style moral system where people tend to pick and choose what they believe in and what they follow without any type of consistency. I don't ever really expect to change anyone's views on things with my poetry. Rather, I just hope I properly capture my own views and, that after reading my poems, someone can see what I see. I would be happy with just understanding my point of view, it would make me feel less cranky I believe.

**Over how long a time period do the poems span? I'd guess that some of them were written about a decade ago. Did their order in the book happen naturally? Were they sorted in any particular fashion with a view to balance in one way or another?**

Many of the poems were just notes in a marble notebook that I have had for quite some time. Over the last five years or so I have been trying to take the notes and work them into poetry. So, the thoughts behind the poems are easily a decade old but the final products I would say five or so years old. The order did happen naturally. As the title of my latest collection is *Snapshots of Life*, I thought it would make sense to put the poems in a progression that would make sense. This collection is very much a snapshot of my life and what was happening or what I was thinking about over the last decade all the way up to the last few months before the book was released.

**How has the book been received? We know that poetry book sales are never going to let any of us retire as wealthy poets or anything! Do you have any tips you could offer to prospective poets aiming for publishing? Is there something that you'd do better or differently next time around?**

To be honest, I have been very pleasantly surprised with the way the book was received. It has been getting amazing reviews from various poets and reviewers. Sales have been consistent and have sold more than I would have expected. You know I just didn't know what to expect, didn't know how people would respond to the poems but really, it has been amazing. Very rewarding. As this is hopefully the first of many collections to be published my goal with it was to get my name out there, put a quality collection in front of readers who would hopefully enjoy it and be interested in future collections.

My tips for poets trying to get their work out there is to write about two hundred poems once you have found your voice (it could take two hundred poems just to find your voice). Submit those poems out there to print and online publications. Post them for critiques on forums and get feedbacks from strangers (don't trust family/friends only). Don't get defensive about rejections. Be consistent and write daily and when you have a good percentage of your poems published, start to send out queries to publishers confident in your writing.

## **What's next for Casey Quinn?**

What is next for Casey Quinn? Well, I have sent in a few small collections to a few poetry chapbook contests. I always write a poem each day in an effort to keep capturing what life is like for me. I try to send in a few poems a month to various publications and keep getting my work out there.

I am going to keep on publishing my magazine Short Story Library and books with ReadMe Publishing. Ideally, what is next is to keep on doing what I am doing. Staying motivated, positive and having a little bit of luck out in the publishing world.

**Casey Quinn** (when he's not working at the bank) is the Editor of Short Story Library <http://shortstory.us.com/> and ReadMe Publishing <http://readme.us.com/>

## **Rock Pool**

by Marilyn Francis

Low tide.

You waited on the weed-slimed stones  
stared down into the sky-reflected pool  
lost in wavering green shallows  
where a secret world went about its everyday affairs.

A stoppered bottle jinked  
loose among polished pebbles  
you hauled it into sunlight  
found inside a piece of blue silk  
from China.

You waited  
for the tide to turn  
threw the bottle back into the waves  
walked back up the beach  
the piece of blue silk still in your hand.

**Marilyn Francis** lives and works in Midsomer Norton, deep in the Wild South West of England, where fictitious TV murders take place every Saturday night. Her first book of poems, *red silk slippers*, was launched on 25th April 2009 <http://www.circaidgregory.co.uk/rsslaunch.htm>

## November Air

by Fran Martel

I missed Mrs Tiggywinkle  
as we walked the lane,  
following steaming cows.  
But Prince barked,  
nosing the corpse:  
brown pancake  
camouflaged amongst so many  
... just more prickly.  
Squashed by the tractor  
or Yuppies' four-by-fours  
splattering fast filth  
across verges, ditches, hedges:  
all grey-brown.  
Like Mrs Tiggywinkle.

**Fran Martel** grew up in awe of the spell cast by the written word. She only dared attempt magic after taking time out from her career to care for someone terminally ill. She wishes she'd been braver earlier.



## **Which Craft?**

by Sharon Birch

A plethora of tricks  
in a brew of ingredients  
a fantasy of gifts  
in a coven of enchantment  
a magical tour  
in the maze of a mind  
mixed with confusion  
and delightful surprise

Make up a mind of creative activity  
meld together in a cauldron of black  
spurt forth a jet of inventive sparks  
ignite fronds of ideas in a flash

**Sharon Birch** is a writer, originally from the North East of England but now living in the Scottish Highlands. With success in flash fiction and short story markets, she has been published in a variety of magazines and ezines. Sharon is currently writing 'Living with FrED,' a factual book about Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome, a genetic condition that affects her family.

## **Instinctive Behaviour**

by Jonathan Pinnock

From his cage on the bridge,  
Captain Edward Smith's pet rat  
(otherwise known as Smudge)  
had an excellent view of the iceberg.

Now, as his world begins to tilt,  
he listens as everyone  
runs around in circles,  
screaming and shouting,

and he has this vague feeling  
that there is something  
that he really ought to be doing  
at this point.

**Jonathan Pinnock** is married with two children, several cats and a 1961 Ami Continental jukebox. He doesn't know a lot about poetry, but he seems to have had a few pieces published recently at places like *Ink, Sweat and Tears* and *Every Day Poets*, and he's even made it onto a few competition shortlists. His unimaginatively-titled yet occasionally interesting website may be found at <http://www.jonathanpinnock.com>

## INSIDE AUTUMN

by Mandy Pannett

An autumnal day for an Ode in a wood –  
an occasion for apples and soup.

Like hungry squirrels we forage for nuts,  
kicking up conkers, chasing a crow.  
Berries are red in the scrub.

Sun is a warrior shield of bronze;  
gods of the winter are near.

*Ghosts of my fathers be gone.*

\*

Later I dream of a circle of birds –  
not crows, they are vultures that haunt.  
I count and recite their names like a chant:

*Saturday*

*Sundown*

*Wasted*

*Lost*

\*

On the day of the dead I go back to the woods,  
to trees which are empty of fruit.

Two barely formed chestnut-pods in their shells  
are small  
as the foetus of twins.

*Ghosts of my fathers, preserve  
the ghosts of my twins.*

**Mandy Pannett** lives in West Sussex, UK, where she is a creative writing tutor. She also supports several local groups and runs an Arts Cafe. Her poetry collection 'Boy's Story' was issued, with music, as a CD. Two further collections – 'Bee Purple' and 'Frost Hollow' – have been published by Oversteps Books.

# Love Misinterpreted

by Robert Priestley

I love you.

You love me?

More than life itself.

*He really does.*

How much?

If I could pluck you heroically,  
from the ocean's raging swell,  
as sharks began to nibble,  
my other leg as well ...

*I might.*

*For seven years I've drifted,  
starving in his sea.  
Perhaps the sharks would be most kind  
and eat him up for me.*

And if from forty storeys up,  
there came your frightened call,  
I'd leap along upon my stumps,  
to try and break your fall ...

*Perhaps.*

*Forty floors and falling,  
back to you again.  
Break my fall as you broke my soul?  
And that will ease my pain?*

And if they scraped us off the street,  
our giblets joined together,  
I hope that we'd stay stuck like that,  
our bodies one forever ...

*Maybe*

*This is my time of leaving,  
your bile on the floor.  
I pray I have the strength at last,  
to be free for evermore.*

Tell me you still love me.

Tell me,  
Tell me,  
Tell me ...

# **Poppies**

by Robert Priestley

For every field of poppies,  
there is a field of crosses.

For every field of crosses,  
there is a sea of tears.

For every sea of tears,  
there is a beach of solace.

For every beach of solace,  
there are a thousand shells.

For every thousand shells,  
there is a field of poppies.

**Robert Priestley** is a full time gardener, part time football manager and spare time writer of children's novels. His work has appeared hardly anywhere.

## **Routine 101**

by Morgan Underwood

The first day of school  
came as a surprise  
the morning my mother said to me  
it's time to go

I wanted to stay where I was  
watching Koalas on TV

So I went  
under protest where  
every morning we pledged  
allegiance to the flag

And every morning I wondered  
why once wasn't enough



## **The Last of the Linemen**

by Morgan Underwood

She  
doesn't want him  
to get up on the roof anymore  
afraid he'll fall

He  
remembers the days  
when he ascended 45 foot  
of tree carcass  
held in space by the hooks on his boots  
and the safety belt around his waist

She  
gives him that look  
one eyebrow raised  
a word unspoken

He  
picks up the telephone  
with gnarled hands  
Dials the local handyman  
puts his ladder back in the shed with a sigh

And waits

**Morgan Underwood** was born in Colorado, lives in Colorado, and will probably die in Colorado (hopefully at an advanced age after travelling the world). She's been writing since the age of 9, when she got a Tom Thumb typewriter from her folks. She stays up too late, gets up too early and thinks a little too much for her own good.

## **From the Corner Cupboard**

by Caroline Davies

Her brother starts clearing the house  
straight after the funeral

at which people, some of them unknown  
to her, came up to talk about mother.

What a lovely person she was  
so friendly despite being foreign.

Joe wants to sell the house  
because they can't

afford to keep it. So now  
he's dismantling it, room by room

But the kitchen is hers.  
She takes away the rolling pin, the spoons.

Reaching into the deepest recess  
of the corner cupboard, in the dark

she finds a Kilner jar,  
filled with the familiar shapes

of root vegetables. Her grandmother's  
recipe which her mother made every October.

She lifts the clasp to release the lid.  
The kitchen fills with the sharp smell

of Dill, fronds still floating amongst  
the carrots and onion. How she

wished her mother would make jam  
for the Christmas bazaar. Said

the pickle made her sick. Refused  
throughout her childhood to touch it.

She takes a fork, stabs it into the depths  
Eats until the jar is empty  
and her face wet with salt.

## **Playtime**

by Caroline Davies

The boy by the fence  
has armed himself with his power words  
Eyes tight closed as the others circle.

Sticks and stones can break my bones  
but words can never hurt me.  
His gran taught him the chant.

They are getting closer.  
If he makes himself small  
they might not see.

Too afraid to curl into a ball  
he presses close  
to the railings.

Closer still  
until he feels a sharp pain  
from the rusty broken upright.

Eyes open wide in shock  
as blood puddles at his feet.  
He cannot move

They are too afraid to approach  
in case they get the blame.

At last the playground assistant  
notices his immobility  
comes to rescue him.

He remembers the lesson well.  
Goes on using sharp objects  
to gain a breathing space.

**Caroline M. Davies** has taken far too long to realise that writing and reading poetry are the things she most enjoys doing. She is currently putting together a first collection of poems.

('From the Corner Cupboard' was long listed for the Poole Writers' Competition)

## **Eye ewes two suck at spilling**

by Helen Whittaker

*(Ms Whittaker's response to TheDeer's request to proofread before submitting)*

Eye ewes two suck at spilling,  
Each were die rote war sarong.  
My tea chair off untold me  
My rye ting adder pong  
Like deacon posing sigh ledge,  
Ore old tramp sunder where.  
Eyed smile and shrug my shoaled errs  
As if eyed id dent care.

Butt tea chair's quips tongue de-plea  
Inn every sing gull weigh  
Bea coz it is my dream too bee  
Adjourn a list sum day.

Mime um bore tack um pewter  
Witch Phil's me with deal light,  
Cause now this grate spill chucker  
Make Saul my spellings write.  
My dick shun Aries does tea,  
Knot oh penned it sins May.  
Dough knead it any longue Ur --  
Aisle throw thee thing eh whey!

**Helen Whittaker** is an ex-pat Brit who lives in Kiwi land, which makes her either a Briwi or a Kit. She has a curmudgeonly husband called Iain and a neurotic feline called Pookie who is, of course, a Kit Kat.

**THE END**