

Flow

In celebration of Poetry Day Ireland (7 May 2015), *Flow* is intended for distribution throughout hospitals and healthcare settings in Ireland. The poetry is a selection from the *Poems for Patience* series in Galway University Hospitals and is edited by Naomi Shihab Nye.

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To download a copy go to: www.artsandhealth.ie Please email your comments to: menuofpoems2015@gmail.com

MENU OF POEMS 2015

In celebration of Poetry Day Ireland

7 May 2015

Some of us came onto poetry first as a refreshing flow of words which moved through our minds, pressing more humdrum chatter aside – and somehow cleansing us. Whether or not we clearly understood every image or phrase upon first or even further reading didn't matter. It is a pleasure to discover poems sometimes where we are not expecting to find them. To bask in language as one might bask in music is a gift... to read, whisper a phrase, repeat again... to absorb the grace of saying and feel our own flowing lives rise up in answer.

NAOMI SHIHAB NYE

The Pencil

CRYSTAL ZHENG (10th grade)

When my mom was a student,
there was a pencil she loved.
When I became a student,
she gave the pencil to me.
She says she can see golden
sunshine spilling everywhere,
every time she holds the pencil.
But I think the pencil is daydreaming,
dreaming itself into being a wise little bird,
pondering all the time,
dipping into the pond to kiss water.
I wish I had magic,
so that I could see my mom,
holding the pencil and smiling
like a little girl.

Kindly gifted by the author.

The Sunday Swim, Comanche Trace

NOEL CROOK

The canyon ledge was steep and stark,
the pool below a patch of dark.

The canyon wrens careened our names
and from the narrow overhangs

the lupines leaned and clung, like us,
to any purchase they could muster.

We grappled down the frowning rock
then bolted for the swimming dock,

slowed to strip down to our skins,
the bullfrogs plopped to beat us in.

Other children, dark and bare,
had bathed and played and squatted there

and left us shining arrowheads
along the rocky water's edge.

The velvet slime squeezed through our toes,
the water greened our feet and rose

around our hips and pulled us in,
filled our arms and cupped our chins.

Its coolness seeped into an ear.
The minnows threaded through our hair.

We floated there along with clouds,
clouds our ceiling, clouds our ground.

Kindly gifted by the author.

A Healing

LEANNE O'SULLIVAN

That first day of springtime thaw when the ice
began to melt and pour down the mountains,
I walked to the top of the old mining road
to hear all the slow loosening and letting go;
the kick-back of copper and clay from my heels,
the steady blasts following like the sound
of another person's footfall on the shale,
spirited behind me; the streams that thundered
down to disappear again underground
so the whole place was all tremble and go,
lightening into a stiller and clearer air.
I loved the copper-lit, the downhill skid and slack,
the water roaring out of time, turning back
with so much sound and rush that it seemed
to be gathering strength from ore and dust and clay,
under the shade of that green and beaten ground.

From *The Mining Road* (Bloodaxe, 2013).

talisman

SUHEIR HAMMAD

it is written
the act of writing
is holy words are
sacred and your breath
brings out the
god in them

I write these words
quickly repeat them
softly to myself
this talisman for you

fold this prayer
around your neck fortify
your back with these
whispers

may you walk ever
loved and in love
know the sun
for warmth the moon
for directions

may these words always
remind you your breath
is sacred words
bring out
the god in you

From *ZaatarDiva* (Cypher, 2005).