

What The Maps Don't Show

A Federation of Writers (Scotland) Patchwork Poem for National Poetry Day 2017



Radio news talks of deficits and cuts,
the moarnin piper screeched
partition and purge,
but rooted in rich deep soil
in the hardness of the land
after a fallen snow
is the freedom you knew.
Freedom. Free-dom,
a word that eludes capture,
defiant and madly beautiful.
I know you feel its weight.

No human hands have made this thing,
no movie reel flicker,
newly-formed jigsaw
or treasure map
but endless possibilities,
an embarrassment o' riches,
poems written in scripts of light,
things from the gift of touch.

I am travelling to an imaginary North,
no longer a slave,
with my songs in my pocket,
the weight of blood like treacle,
happy tae be the me I am noo.
Who else is there to be?
I stop thinking of you
in your sturdy cotton,
your face lit-up
with journeys too many to remember.
Can you see I'm in love?

Bats cry.
liberated and soaring.
Cosmonauts caper upside-down
in exquisite sky glass,
their limbs released
from the plastercast
of guiltless gravity.
We swing our feet,
hold fast to the present,
anchored here in time;
only the sea releases us
to disappear, to care less,
to be free.

I hear a still voice
- it might have been you -
saying
Freedom can never be absolute:
cast off your shackles of deference,
dance and sing and shout,
hurdle every boundary.
Anything can happen here;
if not freedom, let death come,
forget everything and run.

*This poem was created by taking a
single line from contributions by the
following writers :-*

Ruth Aylett
Fran Baillie
Stephen Barnaby
Audrey Biscotti
Helen Boden
Alan Thomas Boyd
Rita Bradd
Kevin Cadwallender
A C Clarke
Anne Connolly
Janet Crawford
Seth Crook
Tony Crowther
Gillian Duff
Etta Dunn
Elizabeth Faitarone
Rona Fitzgerald
Geraldine Green
Mandy Haggith
Jennifer Harley
Alice Jennings
Peter Kelly
David Kilby
Jean Lockhead
Marcas Mac an Tuairneir
Mandy Macdonald
Cara McKee
Ann MacKinnon
Mary McLuskey
Annie Mitchell
Peter Morriss
Anne Murray
Kriss Nichol
Timileyin Gabriel Olajuwon
Lindsay Oliver
Robert Peter
Pauline Prior-Pitt
Karen Hodgson Pryce
Rose Fraser Ritchie
Chrys Salt
Finola Scott
Roddy Scott
Antonia Seaward
Tabby Stirling
Marie-Therese Taylor
John Tummon
Lynn Valentine
Stephen Watt
Carla Woodburn
Erik Zoha

Poem collated by Andy Jackson

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