

# 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  
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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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