



ENGLYN

Journal of Four Line Poetry / Issue Four



ENGLYN

Journal of Four Line Poetry

Issue Four, October 2016
Edited by Liam Wilkinson

Copyright © 2016 by Englyn Press

The copyright for each poem remains with the respective contributors. No part of this publication may be reproduced without permission of the authors and journal editor.

englynjournal.blogspot.co.uk

Contributors

Adjei Agyei-Baah
Jenny Ward Angyal
Pat Anthony
Tony Burfield
Lysa Collins
Ellen Compton
Barry Dempster
Bruce England
Mark Gilbert
Joyce Joslin Lorenson
Joy McCall
Autumn Noelle Hall
Darrell Petska
Paul Smith
D. Walsh Gilbert
Bill Waters
Simon Welander
Liam Wilkinson

“Live your questions now, and perhaps even without knowing it,
you will live along some distant day into your answers.”

Rainer Maria Rilke

Poet

sea wind
my kite
the only fish
in the sky

Adjei Agyei-Baah

impervious
the demons in his mind
gnawing my fingernails
to the quick

Jenny Ward Angyal

green-gold leaves
burnt black by frost—
I dare not speak aloud
my budding hope

Jenny Ward Angyal

poem after poem
about her daughter's death . . .
white on white
the falling snow

Jenny Ward Angyal

milkweed seeds
on silver threads
adrift across the continent—
all the cousins I've never met

Jenny Ward Angyal

burning off
the bindweed
I make room for rosemary . . .
a mourning dove settles

Jenny Ward Angyal

6 a.m. coal train rocking on the rails
clicking steel chopping frosty morning
somewhere miners descend the shaft
watery sun rising in the coal dust

Pat Anthony

Eastern red cedars hold mahogany
light against their greener brethren
sentinels protesting conformity
I sit up straighter, count hawks

Pat Anthony

for her birthday I buy books
on tea, its history leaf by leaf
send them to the tiny shoppe
where she steeps so many things

Pat Anthony

in the upper pastures, skeletons
of summer now brown rattles
pods shaking in ancient dances
my steps change along the trail

Pat Anthony

Who is my trickster?
Steller's jay
the only blue
in the winter sky

Tony Burfield

Through Cleansing-Mind Forest

Chasing my hermit, I top-out on Button Rock.
From below I catch murmurs of human, "Yes this, no that."

The wind breaks up headwords, tosses them off cliffs.
A moment of empty then bird, cloud and jet roar rush in.

Tony Burfield

On Wind-Sway and Ridge Running

Given up on muddy-swift fame,
I sit in the high meadow and eye the far ridge.

The truckers down below jake-brake,
but the trees eat vibration and we sway together.

Tony Burfield

Our Evening Walk

The mountains are still mountains,
and the grasses dry up. Clouds come and go.

Grasshoppers tumble through the air
and my feet step loose over soda cans.

Tony Burfield

Mosquitoes

Hiking up to the tall aspen,
I pass cascade after cascade.

My nephew would love this!
He counts bug bites 1,000 miles away.

Tony Burfield

ceaseless
assault on the senses —
in truck wind
the wet weeds tilt

Tony Burfield

Palau

purple waters
like no other
where jellyfish and wanderers
trace paths of moving light

a glint
of sun
and hills unfold
the song of jungle birds

trade winds
thrust
northeasterly
against the sculpted shore

ground snails
and long-tailed macaques
question
crystal air

late shadows
dance
with twisted vines
and casuarina trees

deep of night -
and still the sound
of dark seawater
Sighing

Lysa Collins

Vieux Carré

A river breeze, the fresh beignet,
night is alive in the city's heart.
I don't drink much coffee, but café au lait
is, somehow, altogether different.

Ellen Compton

Heirloom

The photo is likely from some time
in the middle eighteen hundreds.
We've no idea who he was but,
something about the eyes . . .

Ellen Compton

Baltimore Taizé

I slip into a seat in the back-row pew,
others drift in, find places.
Soft quiet, waiting quiet, breathing slows,
. . . voices take flight.

Ellen Compton

if you stick your head out the door
you might hear me on the breeze
from the Atlantic, cursing
and whooping at the same time

*I've been hearing unearthly sounds -
watching the skies for a flock of cranes
and the lane for the drunken sailor
and all the time - it's you*

Barry Dempster and Joy McCall

On book pages
white snakes
wiggle through
black type

Bruce England

As the police
report it
man on the ground
the last gun out

Bruce England

My dirty
t-shirt
already turned
inside out

Bruce England

a minute's silence
and then
the pigeons take off
as one

Mark Gilbert

mossy stones
in the brook
washing a meal
raccoon

Joyce Joslin Lorenson

cloudburst
pounding earth
to mud
piglets

Joyce Joslin Lorenson

under the pear tree
a young boy
tossing peels
to the chickens

Joyce Joslin Lorenson

tractor's idle
udders swaying
the cows smell
fresh cut corn

Joyce Joslin Lorenson

lying in dry grass
on the horse's body
the smell
of autumn

Joyce Joslin Lorenson

the spell

I'm gathering dark May tree thorns
for the making of a new spell
(some wiser witch of old, no doubt
has made this spell before)

I have picked the new hawthorn leaves
and laid them on the flagstone hearth
on top of the dry broken twigs
and bits of beeswax

on each thorn a holly berry
unripe, the colour of new blood
like those old pinheads in the cushion
my grandmother kept

I have found the small white feather
that will lift when the smoke rises
when the twigs begin to burn
and the wax melts

when the flame takes hold, blazes
and the green leaves begin to curl
and the berries sizzle and spit
and the thorns fall, charred

when the feather rises up slow
even for the briefest moment
and the spell does its kindly work
and the wounds heal

I strike the match and start the song
it is the same as saying prayers
or the chanting of ancient hymns
or any holy work

the song is not in my own tongue
it is the song of the thorn trees
the seeding of the red berries
in the dead of winter...

the feather has drifted away
I sweep the small pile of ashes
the scorched berries and the burned leaves
into the old ashpot

I push the thorns into the ground
one by one around the May tree
I watch the thin crescent moon setting
and go limping to my bed

burying my face in blossom
white hawthorn in the front hedge
beech and hazel leaves touch my hair
like a lover's hand

Joy McCall

I tell him - there are small lights shining
in my weary brain, and he smiles
and says - they must be the first stars
rising in the east

Joy McCall

I stand on the old stone bridge
dropping barley stalks in the stream
counting my years in the dry crop
as one by one, they sink

Joy McCall

I lit the candle in the dark
and prayed the mala, spoke the spell
counted beads and burned the herbs
and rang the bell

there was no knock upon the door
no footsteps coming down the lane
the fire went out, the small voice said
he will not come again

Joy McCall

the tortoise and the hare

no longer do I race madly
dancing around the small green fields
I plod along the dusty lane
my cracked shell on my back

Joy McCall

Autumn

a million stars
pointing and laughing
outside in my nightdress
a fool for the moon

my own worst critic
even with eyes closed
I cannot dance
like no one's watching

Oral Allergy Syndrome
my throat swelling shut
post-cantaloupe...
death by melon, who'da thunk?

confessional writing
as if readers
might offer up
absolution

I'd like to tell you how
I've learned to confine myself
to just four lines
but I've run out of space

sunbeam buttresses
between mountain pines
as trail turns cathedral
we use our inside voices

I never call them
my lost loves
as I've no desire
to find them

like notes on a staff
the song sparrow
darting in and out
of larkspur shadow

at 3 a.m.
my heart skipped
across the pond
and found hers waiting

he catches me
a falling star and puts me
in his pocket the way we save
each other for rainy days

Autumn Noelle Hall

Another sleepless stretch of darkness:
the new parents frantically shushing
and swaying their infant
while the cat pees in the corner.

Darrell Petska

The widow's bitter cup
turns suddenly sweet:
her neighbor's little girl
asks if she'll play.

Darrell Petska

He took pride in writing a noteworthy line.
At his wake a neighbor volunteered,
"Well, the old boy liked his poetry."
One visitant, face veiled, cried.

Darrell Petska

fire and ink

*when
the fires die down
throw the oily rag
let it blaze*

careful
with that love
she says
you'll get burnt

*can't burn
a still-beating heart
he inks dark blues
over the scars*

butterfly
or dragon
I wonder which
she'll be today

*dragonfly
settling on reeds
closing her wings
... waiting*

does time
go slow
in the mind
of a snail

*does the bird
in the egg
know
it will fly?*

time flies
like a hawk
with death
in its eyes

Paul Smith and *Joy McCall*

*the crab sidles into the rock pool
the silver fish circles just above
afternoon sun warms the water
peace settles slow*

perhaps this
is where
the journey ends

sunset red

Paul Smith and *Joy McCall*

From the Hook on the Bedroom Door

His plaid flannel shirt hangs stained, torn, stinking
of sweat and venture's aim;
soft threads mixed with fury slain,
empty sleeves a tight restraint.

D. Walsh Gilbert

That Time of Year

Autumn, and I fall in love with
pumpkins again, with wood smoke
and ragged gaggles of geese,
with ginkgo and pine and oak!

Bill Waters

Meteors
are pretty good metaphors
for our own existence.
Blink and you'll miss it.

Simon Welander

The taxidermist took his knife
And sliced the bird apart
He found an ink-black pentacle
Upon the raven's heart

Liam Wilkinson

While shaving one cold morning
He slipped and gave a gulp
Instead of blood his blade revealed
A layer of pumpkin pulp

Liam Wilkinson

She dug a hole beside the tree
And buried a bloody toe
She hoped the autumn rain would make
A better husband grow

Liam Wilkinson

When Sunday sermon had ended
And the church bell started to ring
I swear I saw at the vicar's heel
The tip of a jet-black wing

Liam Wilkinson

Englyn will be on hiatus until further notice. We hope to return with our fifth issue sometime in 2017. Until then, our archive can be enjoyed for free at *englynjournal.blogspot.co.uk*.

Sincere thanks to all our contributors and readers over the last year; we wish you continued success and much happiness for the new year.