

## **Home**

I live in a flat and always dreamed of living in a big villa with beautiful lush green lawns on both front and back sides of the villa and the entrance gate welcomed by red and rust flowers. One day while I enjoyed my walk and the cold chilled breeze accompanied me, I was wrapped with my overcoat and a muffler around my neck and suddenly I noticed a young girl sitting on the side of the footpath, trying to cover herself from the cold wind with a small thin blanket. After an initial glance I looked at her again wondering how she would have survived in the cold weather. I saw that her eyes were blank and there was no smile, no hope, nor a spark of little happiness. Her blank eyes and dry lips told me that she had no home and no family. The footpath was her home with the open wide sky as her roof which was crude enough at times to shower her with thunder and rain, sometimes with the flakes of snow and at times bless her with the warmth and glare of the generous sun. I came home with a heavy heart that day, sat down on the sofa and put the TV on to see a special programme on air for the victims of the earth quake where many small children, women and old people had lost their homes. I got tears in my eyes, and thought about the people of Palestine, Bosnia and many many other homeless human beings who had lost their own homes due to the cruelty life has shown them.

I felt so restless and at the same time ashamed of my desire to have a bigger villa which I had always dreamed of. I thanked my God for my sweet little home and my heart was full of prayers for all the homeless people of this world. MAY GOD GIVE THEM A PROPER SHELTER TO LIVE A LIFE. AMEN

**Shaista Asad**

**Shaista Asad** is from Pakistan, professionally a teacher, and loves to write poetry. She has written a lot of poetry for kids and is a member of a society of poets in Edinburgh. She is one of the 'books' of Living Library, Edinburgh.

## Home Is Where The Heart Is

My home - place of nowhere,  
My heart...?  
Heavy stone outside me.  
Illusion, impression,  
Mirage...  
Show me the place?  
Give me the power?  
To kill with my  
Eyes,  
Monsters around me.  
Give me the power to run forever  
Closer to the Sun  
To find the peace and joy,  
Acceptance.  
IS that YOU SCOTLAND?  
POLAND did not want me....  
But my hope is dying....  
Soul whispers quietly  
Run and still looking  
Keep your knowledge  
Take your pieces  
Hold them close,  
Never let them go  
THE HOME IS INSIDE ME  
WILL BE THERE FOREVER

**Ewa Bochniak**

My name is **Ewa Bochniak**. I was born in Poland. I have lived in Scotland for 5 years. I am a single mum with two children; never had a chance to get proper education. I'm still trying to find the real home for my family. It is very difficult to be foreign in Scotland. I'm from Glasgow and studying English at Langside College..

## **Aliens**

I am small in springtime  
on my father's shoulders.  
I can see everything even the  
bald patches on the  
heads of passing men,  
a precarious and thrilling position.

My father's hair is coal black and curly,  
Polish hair as foreign as he is.  
The word refugee is as familiar  
to me as my own name.  
I hold his ears for balance,  
while he trots with me aloft.

My father's papers proclaim him alien  
which makes me half alien too.  
Poland might as well be Pluto but  
the iron curtain is real.  
I see it sweeping across Europe  
made of polished metal,  
dividing kin from kin,  
as unfathomable as space.

Small and safe on his shoulders  
his hands steadying me,  
I grip his ears and laugh.  
We are what we will always be  
to one another:  
complicit and loving  
alien invaders of  
a mystifying new world.

**Catherine Czerkawska**

**Catherine Czerkawska** is an award winning writer of novels, stories, poems, and plays. Her stage play **Wormwood** was produced to critical acclaim at the Traverse Theatre and is a Higher Drama set text. She has just completed a new novel called **The Physic Garden** and a collection of short stories.



### **The Midnight Calls**

When the fingers of the night curl around  
One half of the reeling globe  
Enwrapping supine souls in untold dreams,  
Some lie awake, having travelled  
From the other part, physically here,  
While their thoughts dare jet miles  
And enter the sun swathed world  
Of those they left behind,  
Reliving their every irksome chore,  
Their compulsive duties, their age-weary moments.  
But the would-be sleeper's reluctant ear is half alert  
Fearing those midnight and small hour calls.  
'Hello... hello... yes, I can hear you  
Can you hear me? Is everything all right  
What... what has happened... when?'  
Expectant, yet not welcoming the news,  
Knowing each interruption, each intrusion  
Is a message of another departure  
As one more name is struck off  
The phone book, not to be reached  
Again in long distance voice links  
Though remembered in a smile  
And a sense of comfort of a presence  
That will remain amidst a consciousness  
Of a void, as part of a life that is not yet  
Buried under an archaeological pile  
forgotten histories.

**Bashabi Fraser**

**Bashabi Fraser** is a poet, children's writer, editor, translator and academic. Her recent books include *From the Ganga to the Tay, an epic poem* (Edinburgh: Luath Press, 2009), *Bengal Partition Stories: An Unclosed Chapter*, *A Meeting of Two Minds: the Geddes Tagore Letters and Tartan & Turban (a collection of poems)*. *Bashabi* is a Lecturer in English and Creative Writing at Edinburgh Napier University.

### Extract from 'Unruly Night'

“It is early morning  
the dew is still lingering in the fields  
and the schools waiting for the little ones  
and the birds shivering in the dawn chill  
The city is still deep in slumber”\*  
and I have yet to sleep  
a bird has fluttered off my chest,  
and fled,  
soaring above the clouds  
heading for the south east  
the south east  
abandoning this ruin  
for a corner  
where I used to play as a child  
for my satchel and school jotter  
my first sweetheart  
mother’s prayers  
and father’s supplications  
for the onset of my anguish  
and the soul I deserted  
and left behind

Bird!  
have you found them?  
have you recognized them?  
kindly remember me to them  
and salute those holding out there  
clinging to my memory  
pining for me to return  
they are the oil of my lantern  
kindly remember me to them all  
to my sorrowful soul  
... and to my lamented home.

\* From “Early morning” by Ghassan Zaqtan

**Iyad Hayatleh**

translated by Bouzekri Ettaouchi.

**Iyad Hayatleh**, a Palestinian refugee poet, was born and grew up in a Palestinian refugee camp in Syria in 1960. He started writing poetry early and published his work in Arabic magazines, giving many readings in Syria, Lebanon and Yemen. He has lived in Glasgow since 2000, and he is now an active member of SCOTTISH PEN and ARTISTS IN EXILE GLASGOW and has taken part in many events and translation and poetry workshops. His first collection *Beyond all measure* is published by Survivors’ Press. Recently he co-led two poetry workshops in Glasgow and Inverness sponsored by Scottish Poetry Library and Oxfam

### **Dream Song**

Machine guns rattled in my sleep last night.  
Blue sky was full of circling wings  
blackening and drowning out the sun,  
whirling dust into our faces as we ran.  
The soldier's boot was on my face again, last night,  
his body heaving heavy upon mine.  
My little house burned to the ground again, last night,  
as I tried to rescue my rings, my shawl, my son –  
my little jewelled casket.  
But the sun rose up on a burned-out shell  
as I sat and wept beside the tree, again last night,  
last night, that night, and every night.

Grey skies wake for me today –  
yet more accursed rain on stone.  
The grey streets smell of unbelonging  
and faces like blank ovals turn away, away.  
The noise, the acrid fumes – the cars  
and people stare, and stare, just stare.  
Today, no eyes will flash at mine,  
no smile will break to light  
this desert land of plenty  
– this day, today – and yesterday.

Today I will spin aimless, round and round.  
No hand takes mine to the watering place.  
I will ask to hear their songs,  
their songs of work, of play, of love  
but will hear no music in the air.

Tonight, alone in a skyless room  
I will stir a pot of simple food  
and feed my son so far away – then eat.  
The hostile stars may bruise me worse than boots,  
but I will sing my own songs  
of work, of play, of love – and pray.  
Then this, tonight and every night  
I will hold the jewelled casket from my house  
– the only thing I have  
and kiss the dust of my native land.

**Joy Hendry**

**Joy Hendry** is the longstanding editor of *Chapman*, Scotland's Quality Literary Magazine (founded 1970), also poet, playwright, critic, broadcaster and an active participant in Scottish cultural affairs. Currently recovering from chronic fatigue, she's looking forward to resuming full activity. Awarded an Honorary D.Litt from Edinburgh University in 2005.

**The Way Home**

When the sun occupies the heart of the sky in summer, like nowadays, it is not so easy to leave.

At that time of day, outdoor workers like me are compelled to look for any slithers of shadow that remain for use as shelter, even though they have all escaped.

My eyelids used to close automatically to avoid the dazzling sunlight reflected on the sharp teeth of the new, America-made, barbed-wire which squats on the top of the old corroded mesh fence from Saddam days.

Every day, at such times of work, I remember that I must bring my sun glasses next time to avoid getting back memories of the pain that I felt before when I fell on wires like those (barbed or concertina wires) on one of my visits to an American base to find work. At such times, and especially when my young manager is in his office watching the site from his large, clean window, I have to show more activity in giving guidance to the concrete-casting Iraqi workers. I hope to become a permanent employee in the near future instead of temporary because this company would allow permanent employees to stay over night.

The land which was given to this company by the US authorities is much bigger than the lands given to other companies working inside Baghdad International Airport, which is part of an American base called Camp Victory.

Salt spots started to appear on my shirt sleeves (because of sweat evaporation) when the manager sent one of his servants to request my presence. The shock of the cold air currents flowing along the corridor that leads to the manager's office have their own way of convincing my body to stop crying. Gesturing with his hand, the manager asked me to sit then turned to his laptop. When he turned again to me after his little show of being always busy, he said: I want this concrete structure to be finished today even if you and your workers are delayed by 1 or 2 hours and for goodness sake don't start talking about danger. We are all in the same situation. I didn't answer him, not because I know he is a huge liar, but because I really need a safe home here even if it is temporary. Delay in leaving is dangerous.

The sun was still fighting to stay on its throne when I stood in line with the other Iraqi workers to replace the electronic IDs with our Iraqi ones. Then we had to walk a long way to reach the main road. I looked at the long line that the Iraqi workers were forming with their tired bodies. The line was parallel to the long line of the concrete barriers forming no. 11. I thought that the soldiers who were resting in their steel cabins on top of the observation towers could clearly see this.

When I reached the main road I was struggling to find a solution to another equation, how to reach home, which is even more difficult than the equation of our new American friends who always seem suspicious of our friendship. Unlike other days I didn't find the small number of minibuses that used to wait for the workers at that time of day, but I wasn't surprised when I saw the same long line of tired workers walking to AKARKUF roundabout where the nearest civilian traffic could be seen. I hadn't walked more than fifty meters when the earth started to shake under my feet as if there was an earthquake. Then a blast of dust hit my face. I started to run back towards the base again with the other workers, checking my body with my hands for any unexpected injuries. Behind the barriers we gathered ourselves, sitting

randomly while the dust started to diminish. We saw each other's dusty heads and tired faces, as if we had grown older by thirty years.

When we heard the crying and yelling of the injured I don't really know why I thought that the time had come to think seriously about not forgetting to buy new sunglasses.

**Kusay Hussein with Sue Reid Sexton**

This submission is a collaboration between Kusay Hussein and Sue Reid Sexton. Kusay wrote this story in Arabic but all his work was left behind when he had to leave Iraq for his own safety. He is trying to re-write his stories from memory and in English with Sue's help.

**Kusay Hussein** is from Baghdad, Iraq. As a fully qualified civil engineer he worked for the American and British authorities building hospitals and schools for the Iraqi people until he was kidnapped by an unknown military group for several months and had to seek asylum in Britain on his release. He has published many short stories in Iraqi magazines such as AFAK ARABIA and ALFA – BET.

**Sue Reid Sexton** is from Glasgow. She worked as a counsellor for over a decade and spent another decade working with homelessness. She writes novels about war, ordinary people and freedom of expression. She has been published in *From Glasgow To Saturn* and the anthology (In) Fidelity.

## Comin Back Ower the Border

Comin back ower the Border  
The first ye ken ye're hame  
It isna jist the biggins  
The brick gien wey tae stane

*buildings*

It's nae the country roon aboot  
Craggies, cleughs an corries  
Stanes keeking through the shilpit yird  
Less caurs an bikes an lorries.

*rocks, cliffs, glens*

*thin earth*

It's nae the pastels o the North  
The weather-gleam in the lift  
The snell gurlie teeth o the wind  
The smirr in the mochie drift.

*sky*

*sharp, rough*

*light rain, soggy*

It's "wee this" "see thon" "Och, gonnæ"  
The "O" sae straucht an lang  
The "R" rollin richly roon the braes  
The speak on the rise o a sang.

*straight*

**Mary McCabe**

*Comin Back Ower the Border* has appeared in the journal *Lallans* and in the American anthology *Rotten English* (ed. *Dohra Ahmed* pub. Norton). It was also Scottish Arts Council Scots Poem of the Month in February 2005.

**Mary McCabe** has published *Everwinding Times* (novel), *Streets Schemes and Stages* (book on cultural projects), *Die zauberhafte Reise* (children's storybook in translation) and has had radio plays broadcast in Germany and Switzerland, stories, poems and articles in Scots, English and Gaelic. Through the Scottish Book Trust scheme she runs occasional writers' workshops.

### **Apposite colours**

When I see it by its golden frame,  
And its apposite colours,  
The orange sun,  
The green,  
And the Silver River,  
On the bank of the river,  
Small, safe house of wood;  
I remember my childhood

**Faares Mahdy with Jessica Parkinson**

I am qualified as a social worker and photojournalist and have a diploma in the arts. I have written 10 short stories and a number of poems unpublished because of the political circumstances back home. I won the best Arabic poet & performance in Cairo in early 2001 and am hoping to start an Arabic writers' group in Glasgow for communication and exchange between different cultures and opinions. I look forward to finishing my first book in 2010 and I pray to God for no more problems in my life.

For Jessica Parkinson's details, see page 13.

## **Migrant Workers**

This flittin fae citie tae citie  
A few month here,  
a few month there.

This isnae a gap year,  
kids haein time oot stravaigin  
ettlin tae meet cool folk,

in a hostel faur fae hame.  
Budweisar in wan haun  
a chick in the ither.  
Hing oot, chill oot, space oot.

This isnae rich weans wi da's credit caird,  
a few months maturing, braidenin horizons,  
exploring the world afore uni or work.

This is folk fleein fae povertie,  
migrant workers luikin fir income,  
twintie tae a dormitorie,  
bunk bed if ye're lucky.

Mair Steinbeck than Kerouak.

**Liz Niven**

**Liz Niven** is a Scottish poet, writer and editor. She is widely published and anthologised and has participated in International Literary Festivals. She has worked on projects for bodies such as the London Poetry Society, Scottish Poetry Library and Scottish Natural Heritage. She collaborates on poetry projects with artists, sculptors and designers.

## Daughter's Arrival and Marriage

Look who has come to join us.  
Daughter (Laxmi) is born to us!  
Her tiny feet walked straight into our hearts.  
As she matured with time  
Our love for her matured with time.  
Now is the time for her to build her own nest.  
When they come home, they will bring their little ones home.  
We cannot dream their dreams  
But our dreams are coming true for us.  
They are getting married.  
Look back my daughter  
Our blessings are here to stay with you forever.  
We will be gone with time forever.  
Be happy, be prosperous. These are our blessings to you both.  
Love never claims  
Love never suffers  
Love never resents  
Love never revenges  
Love ever gives.

**Manjula Parekh**

**Manjula Parekh** was born in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in 1940 and came to Edinburgh in 1968 to work as a radiographer. She has received the Millennium Fellowship Award and attended the creative writing course at Edinburgh University. She writes in Gujarati, Hindi and English. In recent years, she has developed her interest in watercolour, acrylic, silk and oil painting. She has arranged exhibitions of her work to raise funds for Alzheimer Scotland, Buddhist monastery, Equality Choice Action Group and Tsunami. Her first book of stories with illustrations of many of her paintings and drawings called "Edinburgh Fables" was published in 2001.

## **Distant**

So much like a man sitting straight backed  
under the maple, red and yellow  
the colours of the temple on Shili

beach bent like a sleeping dog, long legged  
headland of black volcanic rock, a ribbed hill with sea grass  
you sank into. You would not speak of origins, yet

as we made for home, leaving  
momentary prints on the sea wall,  
I knew you were also foreign.

Now the maple moves like a dragon  
in this northern land, coyotes call –  
you can neither answer them.

**Jessica Parkinson**

**Jessica** was born in Malawi and brought up in Canada. She studied International Development and Women's Studies in Peterborough, Ontario and has lived in such places as Ghana and Penghu. She is now settled in Kilcreggan on the west coast of Scotland, in a house that has been in her family for five generations. Jessica writes poetry and is currently completing a first novel. She draws on her search for home for inspiration.

## Homeless or Homeful

Before I was ten I lived in eleven dwellings  
and eleven more before I was thirty and three.  
Twenty-two homes to live in and leave  
in thirty years, and you ask me where I come from!

I hear of homeless immigrants and know that I know.

We rented lonely dark places, stayed with relations,  
were 'paying guests' with friends or strangers  
and this was in war-years, the rationing,  
the making-do and managing,  
waiting still and hoping times,  
not quite sure and maybe if and  
*thankful for small mercies* times  
when 'home' was where we were just now,  
where my mother was and where she made  
what beauty that she could as best she could  
and never thought it not *worthwhile*.

A garden or a picture, books, colour,  
the book of nature too and always  
getting rid of clutter, all we couldn't carry  
and a clearing-out and placing-in of us:  
our stories, self-respect, the friends  
we had to leave, the memories that nobody  
could share with us, our dreams, dream-houses  
and our need to hold together to exist.

I've said goodbye to homes where I have worked  
to make them clean and habitable.  
Perhaps I was a slave to them, never ceasing  
in the daily task of damming dereliction.  
There is some freedom in forsaking them,  
in letting run unravelled the woven toil  
of years, made up of minutes, that was  
tight, so coiled around me.

I alone now know about those places  
which I laboured to sustain and then destroyed  
by simply ceasing, moving on. What marks  
of me remain will be anonymous.

Don't ask us where we come from; where we go  
is more important. Yet we leave a trail,  
a string of beauty, broken, that we made,  
homeless yet homeful, scattered now.

**Tessa Ransford**

*Homeless or Homeful* has been published in Tessa's recent book *Not Just Moonshine, new and selected poems*, from Luath Press and also in the Stanza anthology, *Skein of Geese*.

**Tessa Ransford** is past president and committee member of Scottish PEN. She is an established poet, translator, editor and cultural activist on many fronts over the last thirty years and the initiator of [www.scottish-pamphlet-poetry.com](http://www.scottish-pamphlet-poetry.com) and the Callum Macdonald Memorial award for poetry pamphlets. She has recently been Royal Literary Fund fellow at Queen Margaret University. Her latest book is *Not Just Moonshine, New and Selected poems*, from Luath Press, Edinburgh.

## **My House Breathes**

My house holds tight  
as the tides of my children  
surge in and out

swamping  
then stranding me  
among tiny bits of paper  
cut up on the floor  
cold cups of tea  
dirty clothes  
cascading  
down  
the  
stairs  
whorls of dog hair  
wafting in the door draft

my house breathes  
hello and goodbye  
come back  
stay away

to babies metamorphosing  
into unknowable adults  
faintly familiar  
in their laughter and eating habits

all this  
flowing in and out  
routine and random  
my house sighs and sings

soaks the erratic ebb and flow  
the fluidity of childhood

while visiting currents  
swirl warmly around us  
leaving salt water memories  
like white dust

**Cynthia Rogerson**

**Cynthia Rogerson** is a novelist, short story writer and poet, whose works are published and broadcast...sometimes. She is Californian and lives in the Highlands.

## Home in Transit

I know the time of every train that comes in here says Josip,  
the 10.30 from Belgrade, the 12.05 to Budapest...

He sits beside me on the bench -  
thick greying hair, worn leather jacket  
and a smile of welcome.

Drawn to this energy of transit,  
these arrivals and departures,  
his smile of greeting warms,  
just like this spring sunlight  
that drifts on the still air  
on the station platform at Zagreb.

The map he draws for me is miniature  
as if he isn't used to claiming space.  
In Trieste, he begins – and pauses -  
this hotel is friendly, inexpensive -  
tell them Josip recommended it to you,  
I stayed there with a Czech lady -  
two years ago, or maybe three -

I ask him if he lives in Zagreb.  
I come from Bosnia he says.  
If I can find work then I live somewhere.  
They let me stay here -  
he gestures along the platform  
and my eye falls on the empty train track  
stretching in the morning sun,  
and a small shack, tin roof, patched-up boards  
with plastic stretched across the gaps.

He hands me the tiny map  
as the Trieste train approaches.  
Remember, he says – the Hotel Alabarda,  
tell them Josip sent you.  
Remember - you live only once,  
take the good things that life offers you,  
you know?  
He puts my rucksack on the train for me,  
then smiles and waves goodbye.

**Morelle Smith**

**Morelle Smith** was born in Edinburgh, Scotland and grew up in both urban and rural environments: the pattern of moving between these seems to have persisted. Travel has become a rhythm in her life. Since the eighties, she has been a professional writer of poetry, fiction and non-fiction. Her most recent book of poems is *The Ravens and The Lemon Tree* (diehard press).

## **yaadain**

wo kachi dewaar jis se lipet ker roya kertay thay  
wo perd jin ke chawoon mai din ber soyaa kertay thay

yaad ati hain wo gaon kee tang galiyaan,  
wo serson ke khaet  
wo baaghon mai khilti kaliyaan

wo gerdon ka thanda pani jo piya kertay thay  
wo azad hawa jis mai mast ho ker jiya kertay thay

yaad aty hain wo amm ke drahet  
wo tandoore ke roti  
wo tapti doohp sahet

wo raet ke graonday jo buna ker torda kertay thay  
wo gaher galian jo khabi na chorda kertay thay

yaad ati hain wo kholi bahain  
wo sir per haat  
wo rustay per negahain

wo pakey hogee dewaar jis se lipet ker roya kertay thay  
wo cut gay perd jin kee chawoon mai soyaa kertay thay

yaad ati hain ab tu sub yadain  
wo judai kee pel  
wo milne ke fiyadain

wo chel basay achel jin mai chup ker zamane ke shikway sunai kertay  
thay  
wo milti nahi hai goohd jis mai thak ker sir ko jhukai kertay thay.

**Shamylla Syed**

## MEMORIES

The mud wall I used to wrap my arms around and cry  
The huge green tree and under its shadow I used to lie

I remember the tight streets of my village  
The dancing mustard fields  
And the blossoming of flowers in my valley

The cold water I used to drink from our mud coolers  
The independent air I used to walk freely in

I remember the large mango trees,  
Chapatti's baked in clay oven fresh to eat  
And never did I use to feel that day long burning heat

The sand castles I used to make and break  
A home I could never dare to leave

I remember the open arms of my loved ones  
An older hand on my head which gave me blessing and security  
And the longing eyes that would wait for me always

Now the mud walls are all concrete  
the roots of many trees have been cut off and there are no longer the  
protecting shadows I use to lye beneath.

Now I cherish all the memories  
The moments of separation and pleas of reunion

I have no longer the older hands of security on my head as they have  
passed on with time  
I can no longer find that comforting lap I would put my head on and  
escape from the sorrows of my life.

**translation of 'yaddain' from the Urdu by Shamylla Syed**

I came in to Scotland with family as an asylum seeker at the age of 9 and did not go back until I was 19. But when I went back I saw many changes. I had memories of my nana standing at the door waiting for all her grandchildren to return from school safely but when I went back she was no longer there; she had died. I write poems in Roman Urdu text (it's written in English alphabet but pronounced in Urdu).



## **Home**

For some people home is their country, for others their family. But what does home really mean for me?

First of all, it is people and relations between them. If my family and I feel healthy and safe, this is a happy home. The real home is also a place where I can feel free and able to express my feelings easily, even the sadness or the anger. Small things matter too: my favourite books, my music, my beloved cats or friendly neighbours.

However, home is not only the present place where I am living. Home for me is still my parents' home in the countryside where I grew up, the paths where I used to ride my small blue bicycle, my room which was my kingdom and finally my parents and my sisters, who are still so important for me, so this place will stay my home forever.

Personally, I really hope to create a happy home where my family can stay quietly and safe. I dream of living in France, in a small house with blue shutters. I can see my boyfriend and I on the terrace and our kids having a good time on the beach...

Today, my home is in Scotland but I am not sure where it will be in the future; maybe in France, maybe in my Polish countryside or perhaps Scotland will be my home forever. Wherever it is, I think that it is people, not the walls, who make a real home.

**Magdalena Walicka**

My name is **Magdalena Walicka**. I am Polish and studying English at Langside College. After I graduated from Wroclaw University I worked in the Polish-French Friendship Association as a French teacher. In 2007 I decided to come to Scotland. At the moment I am studying English and in the future I hope to teach French in Scotland.

## **In a Drawer In The House Where Oliver St John Gogarty Was Born**

In a drawer in the house  
where Oliver St John Gogarty was born  
I found two purple-edged train tickets  
each marked SOCIAL WELFARE SINGLE  
dated 13 June 2008 (three days before)  
Station From: Tralee  
Station to: Dublin Heuston  
Adult Standard  
Price: 0000.00 euros.  
The house where St John Gogarty was born  
is now a guesthouse offering  
budget accommodation  
(in its high-ceilinged rooms  
still with original features).  
I wondered about the standard adults  
making this stop on the way to where leaving  
two train tickets in a drawer -  
I could find no shape for them  
but a sadness the length  
of Dublin to Tralee.

**Hamish Whyte**

Hamish Whyte is a publisher (Mariscat Press) and a poet: his poetry has been published in various Scottish magazines, and his pamphlet *Christmasses* was published by Vennel Press in 1998. Recent projects include 'Virtual memories' with James McGonigal, and his long poem 'Window on the Garden', published as a book jointly by essence press and Botanics Press in 2006. He is an Honorary Research Fellow in the Department of Scottish Literature at Glasgow University. He now lives in Edinburgh.