Feral

You teach me the laws of language, the fine art of poetic niceties

The flowery language and the language of flowers.

The uses of rhyme and repetition

Rhyme and repetition.

How to construct a haiku:

We say – fuck this shit.

We know the laws – how to break

And twist the wordage

Into something glittering and black.

Something fuelled by rage and pain and loss

Something driven by hatred of the non-entities.

Driven by love of those who care,

Those who take a stand.

We are the broken, the void, the darkness at the heart –

We are the gold in the black and the cracks that let the light out.

Did you think we would maintain the alliteration?

Did you think we rhyme and rhythm this?

We are Poetic Malevolence.

We are the fluffy bunnies watching you sleep

Red-eyed and malevolent, are. You. Listening?

We come from the forest with one thing on our minds

To tear down this valueless-civilisation.

We are punk, we are rage, we are feral and filled with fire,

Filled with anger, filled with funked-up love.

This could be so much better

But for the bureaucrats and bastards.

If you're not standing for a better world

If you're not uplifting

If you're standing by

You're the problem.

And we can all be the solution.

Raise your fist and take a stand

Light the fire in your heart!

Light the fire and declare your passion, pick up your abandoned dreams.

You. Have. Got. This!

We are feral and we've sunk our teath into this world.

We are Tenebrous and we are the dark

Literature

That inspires. That ripples with tentacles,

That oozes with pain and passion and power

And flowers. That bite. The heads off of bees.

We are bialogue and sugar mummy and Irregulate

The wholesome darkness you call home.

Feral and filled with sunlight

Twisted black and dripping.

Moistness. Oozes.

And words, like jewels,

Dribbling,

Spitting fire like passion.

Fire like fury.

We. Are. All – are you listening?

We. Are. All.

Repeat with us.

This is why you are here.

We are feral.

All together now.

We stand as one. We rise as one.

We. Are. FERAL!

Steven Davis

Feral

Sometimes it's hard to remember ,

Where we ate

Who was late,

If we split the bill.

Who's come in who's car?

Who's come...how far?

Who've we forgotten? Not on purpose,

Its just a lot sometimes to remember you all, and those that are part of you

Can become invisible.

Do you see?

A multitude of half conversations, sensations of being part of something.

Not being listened to,

But feeling loved.

Elaborate catch up stories of full lives, reduced to -

"I'm good thanks. You?"

The babies being passed around, soon need their own chairs,

Then arrive in cars they've driven.

Eye rolls from teenagers turn to stares when that one person walks in,

Tanned, healthy, sleek.

"You went where?"

Hints of recognition in bones, eyes, nape of a neck,

The curl of a lip –

Stiff joints that remind you of time passing.

Shared moments from a past experienced together, or told,

As a story

A word, a phrase, “Not that old one?”

It plays again, again and again.

Goodbyes are always drawn out, apart from those who leave early

“What!

Surely you’re not going already?”

(Who are then discussed fervently, in slightly hushed tones).

Hell does freeze over. Apparently.

Because that one person who said they’d never come again

Is the one hugging you tight, kissing you behind your ear.

And someone will always say

“We need to do this more often!”

But we never do.

The table is always a mess,

With one person doing their best

To tidy up, keep order, keep calm

But what’s the harm

in a laugh, an in joke, loud voices, tears, teasing, whispers and groans.

There are no rules, but often wounds

That play out in our minds for a while

Till love, loyalty or familiarity

Draw the pack, back

Together. Sallyann Wright

Roy McFarlane is a Poet, Playwright and former Youth & Community Worker born in Birmingham of Jamaican parentage, living in Brighton. He’s the current National Canal Laureate, appointed by The Poetry Society and Canal & River Trust as well as being former Birmingham Poet Laureate and Starbucks Poet in Residence.

Roy was one of the Bards of Brum performing in the Opening Ceremony for Birmingham Commonwealth Games 2022 and has performed internationally sharing his passion for social justice, equality, identity, love and the healing power of poetry as a witness to our times. His third collection Living by Troubled Waters (Nine Arches Press 2022) is now available.

As Canal Laureate, Roy is interested in exploring how people feel about their local canals currently, and how our national and global history can be read in the story of the canal network’s development, unravelling those untold stories. Loves Jazz and walking with Herons.

Next Breakfast Saturday 13th April – theme:
Where no storms come.

The

Brooke’s Review

Monthly anthology of poems read at the Saturday Books Poetry Breakfast, held at Brookes Bar and Bistro, Priory Street DY11HA

Saturday 9th March 2024 Issue No. 2.

A Tribute to Brooke’s

The second Review should not go out without tribute to Brooke’s Bar and Bistro, and to John, Matt and Jane, who have provided a setting for our monthly events since December 2022.

Brooke’s is a place of comfort, warmth and welcome at all times of day and evening, with an imaginative menu and chef who is clearly passionate about food! It is a place to drop in for a coffee, have a proper (though very reasonable) lunch or book for a family occasion (or tete a tete dinner, if that more takes your fancy!). Whether you’re in for ten minutes or the long haul, the staff will still treat you with the same attention and kindness. The atmosphere is a social one, where diners, heretofore strangers, will lean over and start conversations between tables!

As such, it has been the perfect venue for Performance Poetry. There is space, there is light, and there is free-flowing coffee!

A Further Education (1984/1985)

1.

There were no checkpoints,

No barbed wire or barriers.

I did not traverse

to any strange new frontiers

I just stared through the buses

mildly muddied windows

at ever-lengthening gardens.

Well maintained herbaceous borders,

winding driveways.

The sight of suburban perfect order.

When I alighted

No guard came to check my documents,

Or asked about the ‘proposed length of my stay’?

So I made my way,

To start my further education.

Jay Lewis

(Apologies, Jay. Could not find room in this issue for Parts 2 and 3, which of course are integral to this poetic memoir.. They will appear in subsequent issues, be sure of it!)