



The Writing Group

May - August 2008



The Gateway, Shrewsbury, 2008
Examples of poems from a booklet produced by the
group

Anxiety is like a Dandelion

We need the dandelion to tell when it's time to do some gardening, like we need anxiety to tell us when it's time to get up and do something, e.g. eat, pay the bills. If we don't do something with the anxiety it'll go to seed, just like the dandelion, and the seeds will blow in the wind looking for somewhere to settle. It's not fussy where it settles. It could end up pretty much where it started and we get extra anxiety e.g. the red bill or real hunger pain. Or it could end up where we didn't want it, for example, up the garden path, making it difficult to get out of the house.

The moral is, use the dandelion before it gets out of control and tackle each dandelion as it appears.

Rachel

Beside The River Severn At Ironbridge Park

Still waters on this sunny day
Expressing abundant peace for all
Rippling gently on your journey forth
Just how I need mine to be right now

My time of senior citizen years
Best not move along too fast
That I may drink in God's beauty in my path
And lay aside some ashes of days that hurt

Blessed halfway house of real need
Here – draw closer to the creator Father
And see truths as he would wish
Feel more familiar to his loving purposes

Here silence – interspersed by little songs of birds
In such warm sunshine that brings its healing rays
Speaking to my longings for kindness and sincerity
So reflected from kindred souls who know their truth

Time to sojourn here where best I feel at home
Safely abiding in haven of God's holy arms
For where else could I ever wish to be.

Don

I have not gone

You think I have gone, that I am dead and life has lost its will.
But look around, I am right there, living with you still.
I watch your tears, I feel your pain – I see the things you do.
I weep as well, each time you cry, my soul, it lives with you.

It gives me joy to hear you laugh, and do the things you do.
And when you smile o'er bygone days, I smile right with you too.
For we're still one, just you and me, one mind, one soul, one being.
Walking forward into life, though only you are seen.

And in the stillness of the night, when the pain really starts.
Stretch out a little with your mind and draw me to your heart.
For I am always right in there, always by your side.
For you have been, all my life's days, my joy, my love, my pride.
Campbell

Drugs – Why do we take them?

I don't want these drugs, prescribed or not
To tie me down, take away the lot
Why do I have to take these drugs
At 10 at night and 8 in the mornin'
Why do I have to give blood
Why can't I be almost normal
I shall never know Lack of salt they say
I expect in the search for
normality that forces me to take
my pills. But what is normal?
"Manic depression" I don't mind the depression
though it gets desperate with the O.Ds
Its just the mania, Please help, I dreamt
last night that the drugs were
inducing the highs and lows, who knows?
I could be right, you do know?
Try and reassure me before my life falls
again down around me I beg.
I have taken a big step, I accept that
I have a problem I see it what a mug
But why do I have to take this drug?
Kate

Where's the fire

The people and the streets crushed me
Polystyrene men
Where they crumble and burn
I could not face you
I could not see you

As I hide
I am medicated how are you?
Doctor tell me something new
Even you don't know what to do

A fire within extinguished
My final belly ache
Where's the road?
I lost my way the other day
As I lay spineless
At their mercy

Now you punish me
I am the sinner
You crush me like polystyrene men
So selective you allow the symptoms
You all are my symptoms
Your system

Do I look like the real thing?
Do I sit and smile looking real?
You listen but don't hear
You look but do not see
You wear me down
Ever the victim worn as a crown

I'm queen now
I'm your puzzling creation
Thank you thank you doctor
As you hammer the nail in
Nicki

Bloody Omaha

Today children play amongst the bluffs of Omaha
The beach now host to summer's throng
Its causeways shedding tears of tourists as they meander down tortuous
Paths towards the sea
Marram grass whispers 'Beware' amongst the rusting barbed wire which
waits to snag any unsuspecting passer by
But they do not hear – their ears don't know the sound of death and
destruction that has gone before
Only a dwindling few heed the warnings born on echoes from the past
Only they tread the snaking paths as if on hallowed ground
Inside derelict concrete bunkers with weather-beaten walls they talk in
reverent tones as they gaze seawards
The marram grass whispers 'Beware' – and they hear, as waves lick the
endless wounds of Omaha – Bloody Omaha
At the water's edge he stands
Frail with years, narrowed eyes squint as dawn sweeps its blood-red relief
over sandy bluffs – his back hunched like a mountainside hawthorn
Somewhere distant he hears a bugle's call
The years drain away as, with straightened back he now stands and comes
to the salute
And he remembers Omaha – Bloody Omaha
Once again he hears the growl of Higgins boats plunging through the
waves
And now he sees the faces of seasick buddies – their young faces green
and taugt with fear
To the God within the steel-grey sky he prays, prays as he has never done
before
Now the pack, the rifle, the stuff of war weighs heavy on his back
Now he feels the cold, salt-laden engulfing waves as the craft crazily
bucks from side to side
Somewhere the Devil laughed, for this was to be his day
Ahead the Far Shore, shrouded in smoke and unnervingly still
Above the howl of shells and rockets
Surely nothing there can survive, where death has reigned and only agony
remains
But on the bluffs young and seasoned veteran alike scrambled from their
shell-shocked holes, and now they waited, heavy breaths with fingers
nervously embracing triggers – soon, soon...
Each man; friend and enemy, prayed to his God
For now the Higgins boats neared the shore
500, 400, 300 the coxswain screamed above the roar of engines
relentlessly pounding the surging waves – may God be with you his final
lament
The Far Shore erupted; spewing its venom of searing metal against the

still closed ramps of the landing craft, still protecting its precious human cargo
And men prayed to their Gods
A final surge onto hidden sand and the boat was still – This was it!
The ramp clattered down
Bullets which seconds before clattered harmlessly against steel now tore into flesh and bone
Each falling man exposing his comrade behind to ferocious, indiscriminate death – a dance macabre as bloodied torsos crumpled to the floor
Stunned, unable to move, he watched as buddies disintegrated before his very eyes – Mother! Oh God – Mother!
He prayed, he cursed, and resigned to instant death as he somehow stumbled forward into bloodied surf
Friends, who only hours passed, had mocked at death now lay contorted in heaps upon the floor of the craft
On the beach, only the soon to be dead huddled behind tetrahedron steel
While others took their chance and ran: cursing, crying, dying; they struggled to sanctuary; anywhere but here; here on Omaha – Bloody Omaha
Somehow, with each breath tearing lungs like jagged glass, he made it to the sea wall, behind landing craft still disgorged their fragile cargo into withering fire; the terrified, prone and paralysed upon the open sand, while corpses hitched a ride on the incoming tide, as the wounded drown where they lay, but somehow he was still alive
The bullet, when it came, brought both darkness and peace
No more horrors to see – just numbed pain, a feeble cry and all was gone
The old man traced the forehead scar, its furrow now softened by time
In the distance a trumpet sounds
He bows his head and asks forgiveness: that he should have lived to see grandchildren play
Forgiveness while so many were slain
But now they stand by his side
Here on Omaha – Bloody Omaha.

Jenny

What is happening to you?

I am being eaten
Up
From the insides
Out
By creatures
Much smaller
Than me

Maggots
Thousands of them
Crawling, Twisting, Winding, Gnawing,
Eating
Me

Laughing, Breeding,
Laughing
With mouths full
With food seeping out
Of mouths full
Of me

Maggots
Thousands of them
Thin ones, hungry,
Fat ones, stuffed,
Full of me
Yet still hungry
For more

They are in my stomach
They are in my chest
They are in my throat
They are in my brains
They are in my eyes
They are in my mouth

They are in me

Thousands of them

Can you see them
Crawling across my eye
Wriggling in and out
Of my zig-zagged teeth

I can
Guy