

Storytelling

Men lie more often, it's reported,
yet simply give themselves away.
They'll tell some whopper
then look shifty and disconcerted,
not quite ready to meet your eye.
But women lie more persuasively.
They embroider the story
and back it up
with character and colour.
A social memory serves them well.
They tend not to forget the tale
they've told and much later,
if need be, they can easily invent
a further fib to save the day.

Elaine Barker

*(author of **The Day Lit By Memory***)*

Winter Sports, Canberra

When morning mists that wrap our limpid lake
begin to lift and leave the shores quite free
the tennis players, clad in cap and cloak,
trot out to start a game; but gingerly,
for frosty grass can cause a sudden slip.
The murk of muddy gravel may betray
unwary folk who have a metal hip
and hope to play again another day.
At once the air is pinging with hit balls
while leaps and lunges heat the racing blood.
The shouted scores, sour jokes, triumphant calls
begin to stir a sluggish neighbourhood.

Two hours of hit and miss, of raucous fun
subside with tea and scones in the lazy sun.

Suzanne Edgar

*(author of **The Painted Lady***)*

Wash-day Pockets

A rubber band
Two silver screws
A rusty cigarette lighter
One green marble
Plastic wrap with cake crumbs
from recess

A love heart stamp
A five-cent piece
Watermelon lip gloss
Two fluoro hair ties
One long thick horse hair

Two business cards
One ballpoint pen
A slip of paper
A phone number
A woman's name

Sharon Kernot

What is *Permanent Waves*?

Permanent Waves is a free, community-based project that brings fresh Australian poetry into people's lives. It's free to keep.

Bulk quantities may be requested from www.ginninderrapress.com.au/permanent

The editors acknowledge inspiration from the UK Poems in the Waiting Room project.

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PERMANENT *Waves*

Poetry in the community • No. 1

FREE TO KEEP

once,

looking for a poem
a poem found me

it had the voice
of a young weeping woman
it had the fists
of an angry young man

the poem
took me by the hand

we stood together
outside their front door
in the cold suburban night

and we listened
and we cried

Nicholas Grapsias

*(author of **Children of Leonidas***)*

tanka

how gently
it leads us away
from vanity –
the curve
of a baby's cheek

Gillian Telford (

*(from **Moments of Perfect Poise***)*

Clothes Consciousness

The clothes of childhood haunt me,
still leave their mark on my flesh,
still hang in the mind's wardrobe,

shrunken bathers that chafed,
the prickling jumper, garters
that bit through long school socks,

softened by memory of a party dress,
velveteen with a lace collar,
and the convent sash of merit,
watered silk, worn like an order,
rustling with virtue.

Barbara Fisher
(from *Still Life, Other Life**)

Nurses' Hands

Gloves are mystery
I cannot see
the finger shape
the textured skin
the manicure
for these are all
concealed inside
the latex glove
infection's risk
means none can dare
to be without
and yet...
the touch is there
and through the cover
comes the care
of healing love.

Alan Watts
(from *My Mind a Squash Court**)

Song for the Suffragettes

Oh! those Victorian ladies
their elegant skirts sweeping the floor
their hourglass waists under
four and more petticoats
simpering coyly,
making bright chatter
on the froth of the day
with submissive heads bent
above their embroidery
hiding their laughter
up sleeves of their gowns
hiding rocks in their muffs
for the breaking of windows
to bring them the vote.

Venie Holmgren
(from *Peasant in January***)

Common ground

the man in the open-plan
phone box is speaking
a language as different
from my own
as heart is from stone
but with his free hand
he builds on the air
layers of meaning
and as I pass I see
the shape of familiar words
you me now
the way they hold themselves
like cornerstones
marking out common ground

Jane Williams
(from *Begging the Question**)

Dust

She has learnt to welcome
the dust loafing on furniture
like the neighbour who pops in
occasionally with spare lemons
and a cosy line of chat.

She finds treasures in dusty corners
a pearl button, a paperclip
a sliver of onion skin
the curled and crumbling
body of a moth.

A soft dust blanket lies
on the polished wood
blotting out her reflection.
She draws a smiling face
and curls up in a corner.

Jennifer Chrystie
(from *Polishing the Silver**)

Moonlight

entered the house through
sweet-shop window panes
leaving squares of light
littering the brick floor
and upstairs in the minute
attic bedroom this flaxen
moon creates diamonds

Daphne Hargreaves
(author of *Briefcase of Lives**)