

I held it close, I guarded it,
and would not let a morsel out,
no drop I shed upon the world
because it was not mine to give
for it belonged to one alone,
and yet I know not who or where,
and then I met, and then I saw
and then I knew the hour had come
when I must hold it in my hands
convey it through my weary eyes
and sing its song through faltering lips.
So I extend my trembling arms
which had been closely held by me.
To proffer that so closely held
by me through formative years,
through all those frantic noisome years
when I has closely guarded it
and now I hold it out to you
for you to take, if you will come.
If you will come, this love I give
this love I give, if you will come.
With love you come, with tears too,
that edged between your laughing voice.

With love you came, with love you came,
with tender words you came to me,
for you was lost and I was too
but circumstances
would not set us free,
we should have known, through all the pain,
through tears mists we could not see
that it was meant we had no choice
this love was always waiting here.

Drumau Mountain, still in
domination after centuries of watching
the demise of hut and shelter, and
the creep of ever evolving ugliness
towards the white snakes liquid coils.
On your brooding heights, Carreg Bicca,
the great standing stone, endures with
the cairns of forebearers, and
Silurian fire still smoulders darkly,
and what of us, who spent our short
spans in your shadow, were we ever
really touched by your mystery? Is it
too late now? We ponder this as we
bow towards you.

Blustering through some blighted town,
unsure in our role, we strut,
and mouth the ingrained withering jibe,
at villagers in weekend throngs,
who prop the bars and speak the tongue,
sing and speak the mother tongue.
And yet we clutch at verbal crumbs,
swmai, we cry, well, dew, boy, bach.
Then as the songs flow with the ale
we lend a voice to calon lan,
and filtering from surrounding streets
do wraith-like children crowd the door
with alien knots around their necks?
for they dared speak the mother tongue
sang and spoke the mother tongue.

Do you remember the cottage with the sloping roof
 and your children filling the tiny rooms as noisy and clamorous
 as bees, in a beamed hive
 Ah yes, the beamed ceiling, even that did not escape your touch
 as you brushed on the flour and water paste.
 Who ever saw a papered beamed ceiling? you did, we did
 I see you now stood at the tables end, the sustenance you
 placed before your ravenous brood, how did you stretch
 the pittance you received to keep our bellies full?
 And what was the secret of the hours that stood still
 as you joined us in simple games that brought
 the vanquished tears, and the victors glow, balancing emotions,
 giving all to childhoods pangs and joys, as in the iron months
 of Winter we spread ourselves near warmth.
 The fire as red as a maidens dream,
 the kettle as black as a devil's hoof, with marble dancing
 to times incessant tune, marking off our days there with you.
 And now you sit with the screens flicker
 dancing on walls, looking into worlds that
 were never yours, but the ravages of envy and
 aquisition never lined your face.
 Your world was of children and the love
 and heartache they bring.
 And so we gather here, thinking that after
 eighty years, we know what lies behind
 your sometimes far-away eyes,
 but no, its your secret, lock it away.
 For you are the quiet lady, the eternal woman.

Terry Hetherington

My grandfather and father came from Ireland and settled in Wales,
 where I was born.
 In the schools Welsh history was given little attention. Only the
 unglorious history of England. We had an Irish teacher who ignored
 the curriculum and taught us Welsh history.

 Fifteen years old, and rambling on,
 and bending poor old grandad's ear.
 With tales of Welsh heroes derrin-do,
 Llywelyn Fawr and Owain Glyndwr
 that bringer of storms who freed the land
 of all things sullied by the human hand.
And I'm Welsh, it's in my blood, - my brain.
 I share the joys - I feel her pain.
 My grandfather knocked out his pipe
 scoured the bowl, then looked at me.
 Ah, well now boy - that may be
 but what's the colour of your father's blood?
 you've and Irish gimp you can't erase
 there's no denying what's in your face.
 Well now, I'll borrow from old Wellington's stable
 that lachico of Waterloo fame,
 who also played the turncoat game.
 Oh that gob of a man, - what he said,
 I'll modify, and turn on it's head,
 You were born in Wales and so you're Welsh.
 Well, if that's your wish:
 But if a cat's born in a kipper box
 it's not a bloody fish.

The wind veers sharply,
 not best pleased by the anchovy flavour.

But they are forest bound where.
 The oak tree shed it's bursting sprouts,
 the broom, its chillies piquent heat.
 They gather these, then
 Wave and whirl their modified,
 wand like, sexual appendages
 amidst the garlic scented meadowsweet.

Incentives to hard labour all but gone,
 some idle rustics gather to cheer them on

And in the whirling and the waving
 (not strictly masturbation)
 the key is synchronation,
 a unified, copious, libation:
 AAAh,... such unmodified elation.

And, she appears

A hot, quite indulgent,

Though, somewhat pungent,

Blodeuwedd recreation.
 Throughout the world,
 not a single extinct species reinstated.
 The knockers knock, as knockers will,
 (though in truth, they flog the overskill)
 Look to history they say,
 the alchemist, too, had their day
 not a dribble of gold from the bubbling lead.
 The philosopher's stone? Enough said.

Funded by penitents, poets, some main-chance admen,
 well-heeled dropouts and sundry madmen,
 The Welsh researchers stand at bay.
 Jaded by years of rigid science
 enforced compliance, they forsake
 reliance of cloning, G.M., and DNA.
 Finding a subtler, softer way.

A blend of mysticism, physics, sex,
 with royal approval of Rhodri - Rex.

The aged monarch in their thoughts,
 thirty strong, the lab congregated
 go forth circmvate a field where
 rampart carrots rise above the soil,
 needing the west wind's favour.
 A blowjob.

On the evening prior to H.R.H's arrival at Neath, John and I met in the Queens Hotel and drank steadily while awaiting the time for our lightning raid on the park opposite. Our intent being to lower the Union Jack brazenly displayed at the flagpole's top, and replace it with the Red Dragon. Drinking time at the Queens, (the Queens - very appropriate considering the circumstances) went on, and on. But about 2 hours past official stop tap we sort of fell out of the place. Marvellous pub, the Queens, pity about the name. Victoria Gardens, (good God, another Queen) blanketed in frost, awaited our intrusion. We weaved across the road with all the stealth of wounded cats. The three foot high boundary wall being a formidable barrier to drunken patriots, we fell into enemy territory commando style. During our search for the bush in whose depth we had earlier concealed our half gallon of paraffin, John lost his glasses and so was rendered virtually useless to the operation. But the hated Jack, hanging limply in the still air, must come down, be joyously put to the flame, the proud Dragon hoisted.

Over booze, we'd visualised the consternation of fawning local bigwigs. Call themselves Welsh? Why one had even started dropping the letter E from his surname of Davies. Thinking of it now was enough to make us puke, which we did with gusto, nothing to do with the booze of course. And I feel sure, remembering how high our emotions were running that even this primitive necessity must have been performed to the gurgling tune of Calon Lan, and with the highest patriotic principles.

Dew, it was a freezing night, eyes still steaming from our noisy retching, we put hands to frost covered rope. Down came the Jack and lay in a heap in the deep gloom at our feet. John reached inside his shabby but voluminous overcoat and like Merlin, magically produced Y Ddraig Goch, it was very dark, we were, well, rather drunk, and in our excitement we staggered about lurching into each other, and getting annoyed. At this point I confess that we let Wales down rather badly by allowing our expletives to lean more toward old Anglo Saxon as we blundered about our task. But soon, up went our flag. John shook the half gallon of paraffin over the object of our hatred, soaking my shoes in the process, after all, he had lost his glasses.

We applied a match to the corner of the crumpled heap of material, then staggered like hell from the scene, repeating our commando fall, but this time onto the pavement. We then clasped hands - "Nos da John, Nos da Terry - nine o'clock then, see you here at nine". Walking to the park at 8.45 a.m. I was well hung over, but elated, a wind had sprung up, I could hardly wait to see Y Ddraig Goch flying proudly, where a few hours before the Jack had hung so limply. When I arrived at the park, John was already there, near to tears. I looked up, the Jack flew straight and true, now and again flapping in arrogance. The Red Dragon having been reduced to ashes by two dedicated but drunken, freedom fighters.