

Poems by Jo Salmon

The Big Day

It yawned open, terrifying as a blank page.

It grinned as wide as an Altringham Feline.

Its cold laughter spread obscenely fast

into the expanse of sky,

and into every root and worm, around

360 degrees, for further than I could bear to see.

And so I lowered my eyes,

And to escape it I went back in-

To the safe shell lined with dark blankets.

'Just for a little while longer',

I told my-self,

And waited for the comfort of night.

Their demands for ordered happiness

Their demands for ordered happiness

Eluded and escaped him,

Like squidgy soap squeezed

Through tense, clasped fingers

And tightly held hands.

He ran

Like water chased rapidly

By anxiously rowed rafts

By strangers who told him they were kin.

“Save the sunshine!”

“Look to the light!”

“No shadows at noon-time!”

“It’ll all be alright!”

They lied.

To themselves.

They knew

That deep was what they hid,

Dark was what they knew.

Blinded by staring at the sun,

Praying that evening would not come.

He saw them fearing the night.

Time

Holds the key to the inner spaces of acceptance and healing.

The key that unlocks the dungeon of the castle of experience.

Finds the space to retreat into, expands, confines to freedom.

Is the thread that Theseus unwound and rewound to discover
the expanding spirals within the Great Spiral

Of the Labyrinth of the son of Pasiphae.

Is the pulse, the pace and the pendulum

Of dreams that wait for no-man.

Is the landscape in which we live.

Stops all things from happening in no-time

Is the journey of all days, and of lunar, Taurus nights

Gotten and given and saved.

When I'm With You

I can feel my life ebbing,

Dripping away,

Soul drop by soul drop.

You block me, you trap me, you drain me.

I can't show you my face,

Because you'll ask questions about my expression

And I will have to answer with lies in order to protect your feelings.

So I stare at the screen,

At the flashing, hypnotic, idiot's light,

Faking taking in the tripe they've dished up.

I don't act natural, I act neutral.

But this page only appears to be blank

My face a picture of passive.

But written in invisible ink

my 'I' has scrawled in capital letters

'I'M TRAPPED! STOP! LET ME GO!'