

Pathways

by

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Supporting Mental Health in Performing Arts

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Second Chance  
you may need it next

Dedicated to my Mum and Dad who have supported me.

## EXTRACT ONLY

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## Milestones

Kristy was the girl next door  
Our world a sea fan silk of dreams  
A wall, the wagon for our wild west waltz  
Then we would cram ourselves with candies  
In our Aladdin's cave  
Memory fragments, kaleidoscope of camera.  
But we grew up.  
We ventured through the woods and groves  
Country lanes, then fields and hills.  
Our world enlarged.  
We swapped our friends and tales  
Behind the rustic inn  
Knew which girls had ponies  
Who played japes on Halloween  
Which boys played kiss and tell.  
These rainbows twist and merge then disappear,  
Forever to replay at will and whim;  
A world that's far away.  
They led me here.  
The world is open still.  
There is a road ahead.  
I'll follow it.

## January at Arnside Shore

We strolled  
spied a heron surfing.  
Cloud and drizzle cast grey  
on sky and sand.  
Herring gulls coasted  
on silver pools  
rippling and restless.  
In the distance slate branches beckoned  
with cadaver fingers  
to black hills beyond.  
Beauty ruled  
a winter palate in charcoal  
before the rainbow of spring.

## Enemy in the Midst

1

The children pranced beside the pool  
Unchained from toil or care of rule;  
unthinking, brave, with laughter true.

2

Like eagles' wings their arms spread wide.  
In arcs they swooped as over tide  
and swift their play in boldness grew.

3

One boy a bow with arrows made.  
A knife he owned with hilt of jade  
and whooped salutes proclaimed him king.

4

The soldiers wild, they heard a cry  
so soft at first, then footsteps nigh  
and scream so shrill around them ring.

5

The squaw she fell before them there  
with clothing slashed, dishevelled hair  
and bruises black upon her back.

6

Pursued was she, so swift as gale  
their knight took aim. (He could not fail.)  
Form fled with groans, no man to track.

7

And all his courtiers flung themselves  
around the maid, like gallant elves,  
their lady fair to soothe and save.

8

They brought her gifts from nature's fare;  
a crown of daisies for her hair  
and berries blue from woodland cave.

9

She sobbed, beguiled, and trembling, smiled  
Invaded worlds, so saved by child!  
She raised her head, met azure eye.

10

Hand pointed far to distant hills  
the cougar's lair who lurks or kills  
and underfoot the snakes to lie.

11

Yet all arose; walked hand in hand  
together trekked on barren land  
until her father Chief they saw.

12

She spoke, excited, in her tongue  
with lilting tones her soft voice sung  
He raised his hand, then smiled; no more.

13

They bowed, then left, adventure done,  
and marched on home, their glory won  
their secret locked within their hearts.

14

No more they pranced beside the pool  
nor sought the hood so slain with tool.  
For future years were warriors' arts.

## The Shore at Bolton-le-Sands

Tawny seafloor stretches  
misshapen, feral  
thrills ear with squelch,  
delicious.

Oasis-like, pools stand;  
film over lichen-wrapped rocks  
while ahead lays the sand worm's traces  
and scattered stones  
with etches of footprint and paw.

The story of today vanishes  
sea-eroded  
to revive in a green day;  
Time's cycle,  
Eternity's law.