



SHAMFEIGN



SHAMFEIGN

Alice Hooton

Alice Hooton ❖ **SHAMFEIGN**

SHAMFEIGN

a collection of poetry by Alice Hooton

first edition 2011

BF Publishing

45 Ivanhoe Road

Grey Lynn

Auckland 1021

New Zealand

ISBN 978-0-473-18062-1

cover photo of Rosemary Kennedy Lennord with her kind permission
book design and typesetting by Adam Gillitt, **www.gilli.co**

**Thanks to my family, Alistair Paterson, Lee Dowrick, Jack Ross,
Wensley Wilcox, Jacqueline Crompton Ottaway, Joan Rosier Jones
and Raewyn Alexander.**

All writing in this volume is copyright and all rights to the poetry belong to the author. Poetry may not be copied by any means without permission first in writing from the author, except when fairly quoted in a review or similar, and criminal prosecution may result from any breach of copyright.

Table of Contents

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 7 A Pair of Skates | 49 Invasion |
| 8 Beryl's Lot | 50 Life Still Life |
| 10 Charlie | 51 Like Icarus |
| 11 Lizzy Wrote | 52 Marazita Camp |
| 12 CAFÉ BLACK CAT | 54 Mrs Casy |
| 13 Paris in a Suitcase | 56 Mt Eden |
| 15 French Leave | 58 Nachtigall |
| 16 Garabaldi | 59 On his Father's Side |
| 18 1915 | 60 Out West |
| 19 Belsan Belsan | 61 Outside John Court's |
| 20 1944 | 63 1936 |
| 22 Photograph | 64 Paris 1939 |
| 23 Harp of Erin | 65 Posthumously |
| 24 On the S.S. Campania | 66 Saturday Arvo |
| 25 Confined to our Berth | 67 Shelter |
| 26 First Class | 68 Skipping Rope |
| 29 April 22 nd | 69 Spring |
| 31 Alberto Poletti age 11 | 70 Standing Room Only |
| 32 Ellis Island | 72 Strangers |
| 33 Old Talk | 73 Synaesthesia |
| 34 Winter | 75 Sparrows |
| 35 Glendalough | 77 Dublin Records |
| 36 When I reach Sleá Head | 79 The Father I don't Remember |
| 37 What I can See | 80 Sunday Afternoon Man |
| 38 Shannon to San Miguel | 82 The Night the Big Top Burned |
| 40 Poet's Day 2009 | 84 With a Bit of Practice |
| 42 Aunt Eliza's Quilt | 85 Under the Weight of Applause |
| 43 Darwin's Burning | 86 Ward 10 |
| 44 Going Spare | 87 We're British |
| 45 Gravity | 89 What about |
| 47 Op Shop | 90 Ashes |
| 48 Skins | 92 Glossary and Notes |

A Pair of Skates

The solitary boy
seeks the mirror of reason

how distant
how cold the frozen lake

his mother would give him
the world

a pair of skates

if he could
solve the riddle

arrange broken shards
spell the word empathy

Beryl's Lot

Before I had time to make arrangements
Tony's son was back in Spain afraid he'd be given a bill for the funeral

Jacqueline arrived from Amsterdam Friday
never went to see her father at the undertaker's

St Mary's of the Angels was a good choice
happen the Lady Chapel was built by Tony's dad

wish I'd known earlier would have given the priest something to latch on to
apart from Tony being an altar boy

my cousin Len did the flowers -
iris and daff's

instead of a third hymn
we had Greensleeves Tony's favourite

at the cemetery Jacqueline ignored me
scooped up some soil pushed past the priest and undertaker

I'll fax her tell her
Tony left her the old yellow rug if she wants it

neighbours from No 4 not well enough to attend decided
they would rather replace a rotten fence post than make a donation

must be the only fence post in history dedicated
to someone's memory

Tony's first wife accosted me in the shop Monday
said she hadn't gone to the funeral because it wasn't her place

didn't tell her I saw Tony's ex crying her eyes out
at the back of the church

this morning a lone swan flew across Marshside
tried to imagine Tony hovering on some astral plain

as for me for the first time
since my divorce fifteen years ago I'm having a car boot sale

Charlie

was tall
for his age

when that woman
on the tram

dropped a white feather
in his lap

he walked all the way
home from Newtown

shut himself in his room
and cried

next morning
he rode the butcher's bike

to Manners St
and joined up

Lizzy Wrote

Dear Charlie
Mum took to her bed

since they sent you
to Gallipoli

from the sound
of your letter

the Army's
not treating you fair

please Charlie
tell them your age

they'll
send you home

CAFÉ BLACK CAT

Open day and night

for good time and cheeper

SPECIAL INDULCEMENT

if like good Coffee

Ice beer

Wine

Wiseky ect

Flamencos dancers

ALL AT SALE PRICE

come here and get it

Paris in a Suitcase

Her cheeky
feathered hat

his
little one

his
Fraulein

in peasant blouse
and dirndl

shares his
passion

for mountains
flaxen-haired youths

sporting in alpine
meadows

her currency
laughter

his homage
exposed to light

her January
general

jewellery
a silver fox fur

that Munich villa
with a bluebeard key

French Leave

He remembered
hands

nakedness
between linen sheets

urgency that wilted
in morning's light

laughter
a beaded malice of birds

on a silk
screen

pink as the tongue
of a size three shoe

behind the door

Garibaldi

Give them
a square

of red linen
a thread

from his
tortured shirt

tell them
the spring dry

for seventy
years

wells
true

let them carry
his image aloft

through
fields

chanting
“Santo Carlo Santo Carlo”

build
a shrine

a shrine
of white stones

on the hill
of the yellow goat

let the soldiers
come

let the
darkness

1915

Cold past bearing
triggers jammed

Turks feeling the pinch
a few stumble into our lines

deadening silence
huddle under blankets

some of the men are exchanging
last thoughts and messages

I write your name
try to imagine sun

languid on the counterpane
our little house in Kandallah

all are exhausted
one poor chap suffering frostbite

first white Christmas
for many

Belsan Beslan

I tell you
a story

of children
who ate frozen
potatoes

had never tasted
gingerbread

when their parents
took them to hide
in the forest

the little girl filled
her pockets with stones

night so dark
they could not see
the moon's light

the boy whispered
"There are no witches

only soldiers
and dogs"

1944

We squeeze
into the Austin Seven

Aunt Joyce
is taking us to the station

round the waterfront
sounding its whistle

comes
the big K

people
cheer

Mum shouts
“Stan Stan

we’re over here
Stan”

I don’t
recognise Dad

everyone is hugging
and kissing

Dad ties his kit
to the bumper

sits me between
his knees

I feel the press
of his belt buckle

smell his warm
beery smell

at France St
we all climb out

Dad groans
“Strewth

you nearly
disabled me privates Son”

Photograph

Coney Island
1912

broken heel
on a borrowed shoe

a note signed
well-wisher

passed hand
to hand

in the Tunnel
of Love

dogs bark
in the alley

a suitcase waits
outside the door

in the parlour
Last Rose of Summer

played
on a spinetta

Harp of Erin

McMahon
didn't last

first
round

O'Sullivan
slow on his feet

go for
gullet

down like
a winded nag

crowd
chanting

dancer
dancer

On the S.S. Campania

Foreign
accents
slide

struggle
to translate
upright

seventh
the wave

no one
saw

breathless
against
the wind

prayers
empty
of sleep

whisper
Titanic

Confined to our Berth

Desperate
for a drink

of
clean water

I was sick
all of us were sick

I don't want
to remember

Rough-looking
men

labels
round their necks

babbling away
in their own lingo

children running
amuck

a young girl
dressed in rags

nursing
a tiny infant

First Class

My sister Bessie and I
were terrified

made friends
with Mary Lynch

and her brother
Michael

who deserted
the British Army

there were
three boys from

Clifden
musicians

we had
a great time

at night
dancing on deck

all the old
fashioned tunes

My brother
Michael

played
shuffleboard

with a teacher
from Athenboy

Mary this
Mary that

we soon tired
of hearing

about this girl
he was coming out to marry

on the ferry
to Ellis Island

he was
agitated

maybe
she'd mistaken the day

there she was
waiting by the kissing post

She was plump
positively dowdy

you couldn't
place a pin between freckles

when she smiled
it lit up her whole countenance

we were
struck

that someone so ordinary
so commonplace could be so beautiful

wish I'd never
set foot

on this poxy
ou'd boat

April 22nd

The sea is
calm

great mats
of seaweed abound

one imagines
leviathans

Last night a woman
in steerage

was delivered
of a still born child

Gulls shriek
dive

as the little
casket

is consigned
to the deep

We are
unable

to face
lunch

Already
the grey promise

of land
can be seen

on
the horizon

America
America

Alberto Poletti age 11

Mamma
Pappa

my brother
Domenico

sisters Mia Sofia
Caterina

watch from
top deck

entering
New York harbour

“Where are the
mountains

the
valley?”

“Statua Liberta
Statua Liberta”

Domenico
shouts

horn blowing
everyone yelling

a wave of applause
overcomes us

Ellis Island

I tell
the uniforms

my money
is stolen

I am
to be sent back

to
Lodz

the mother I help on ship
when her little daughter sick

say not worry
not worry

I think
she will forget

when her husband
arrive

she give me
the twenty five dollars

that is how
I come to America

Old Talk

On the grey heel
of the bay

that split
branch

on the rata tree
will sever

rain
rain on the wind

old injury
rankles

once I was
the strong one

carried you
on my shoulder

that broken
guitar

you left
behind

plays no
consolation

Winter

The child
needs shoes

proof I've
been living

beyond
my means

drained
the pool

sold
the car

his diamond
merchant says

“Nice setting
for a zircon”

it's colder
this year

plug the draughts
with paper

Glendalough

Walking
in the cemetery

with disquiet
monks

last time
we spoke

leaves from
the holly tree

I keep
in my missal

dear
Tom

how you fought
against death

now you have crossed
that bridge

I like to think of you
standing by the lake

preaching
the gospel

of living
proof

When I Reach Sleá Head

every road
every turning

I can see
the ocean

imprint
on my soul

westwards
our islands

clear
after rain

from the white
strand

I hear
them

my mother
my father

Ashling
Ashling

calling me
by my given name

What I can See

Gothic
windows

double
vision

four pigeons
graze

Presbyterian
church spire

shadow
ribs

late
summer

steps
to the sea

roses
blowzy yellow

tea roses
fall

Shannon to San Miguel

Later
in life

charming
silver-haired

flying
instructor

made
your bed

another wife
blonde pretty

many years
younger

three sisters
one brother

half a world
apart

ponder
your complexity

how anger
simmering

one
morning

behind the newspaper
snapped

a medium
claiming

past
congress

tells us you're flying still

Poet's Day 2009

Archeologists
prove homo sapiens

practiced
cannibalism

swine fever
spread

epidemics
of chicanery

not seen in London
since thirteenth century

sea engulfs
Kiribiti Island

thousands hikoi
for Maori voice

windmills tilt
across the land

has Gaia
replaced God?

chemist
supplies P

Scorpios
believe

nothing
worthwhile

in life
comes easily

poets wander
streets of Auckland

in search of
A Midnight Kiss

Aunt Eliza's Quilt

Irish Chain
Ship's Wheel
Storm at Sea

Wagon Trail
True Lovers' Knot
Wedding Ring

Tall Pines
Log Cabin
Cross upon Cross

Sam's Choice
Railway Track
Drunkards' Path

Job's Trouble
Suspension Bridge
Falling Star

Twin Sisters
Forbidden Fruit
Broken Daisies

Darwin's Burning

Shh shh
listen

for the hum
drone

enemy
aircraft

over
the Waitaks

searchlight
hill sky

sirens
howl

what will
happen

when
the Japs come

Mum?

Going Spare

Jase says
I've got Nicole Kidman legs

what a way to lose weight

Mum and Dad
are shattered

going to be so hard
to say goodbye

sometimes I feel unreal
like I'm floating out of myself

the Hospice car park
off Shea Terrace

we can share a coffee
pretend we're on the piss
at Ro'toto's

make it soon
I'm going spare

Gravity

You longed
to live

see children
grow

a son
marry

my dear
irreplaceable friend

nothing
can be done

about your
unexpected slide

hovering
between dimensions

conversing
with angels

while you
labour

tethered
by the pull

of all that
is earthly

these
partings

are holding
you back

Op Shop

World
of Van Eyck

page
nineteen

Eve's
nipples

hard
as

unripe
apples

Adam's
central

European
stalk

fig leaf
bikini

sea
sky

a measureless
duplicity

of
blue

Skins

My wardrobe is stacked
with infidelities

visiting uncles

“Go out and play don’t come in
till you’re called”

a woman’s hair
black with rain

my father signing the register
at a Rotorua Motel

promised seaside
holidays

a cousin with a fetish
for leopard skin

sending a photo
the doctor’s daughter

who ran away
with my lover

caught by the camera
an ordinary face

giving nothing away

Invasion

When they
burnt him out

westward
he rode

plundering rath
and holy wood

risking treason
he kept land

green
folding acres

a lake blue
as God's eye

on a hill stone
by stone

he built a tower
it embrasured light

echoed the battle cry
of crows

Life Still Life

Fritta
sketches

guard
barbed wire
fence

tree
window

musicians
violin
trumpet
accordion

people
at table

the
Kaffeehause clock

from *Art of the Holocaust*

Like Icarus

A boy

careless

unstoppable

gliding into the wind

ecstasy

that calculated lift

the dizzying

from
her hospital bed

the child
who has been taught

to believe
in angels

watches
him fall

out of the sky

Marazita Camp

Rumour has it we are leaving for home August 1st
our Brigade is unfit for service
one hundred and forty paraded sick this morning

none are spared heat brackish water flies
sand invades every crevice
we're camped near an oasis
picturesque sunsets followed by bitter cold nights

went to visit Bob Rimmer
who was kicked by a horse
the hospital was so large couldn't locate him

cannot describe the chaos the suffering
poor chaps must've been in Hades
ninety percent infantry
don't half get the brunt of it

one of our officers has been sent to take command
of an ammunition column in the Dardenells
wish him all the luck he treated us well

transferred to barracks
thankful not to be sleeping
in the open

big dinner tonight
General Chief of Staff Officers
have to do the cooking
bit of a tickle job for a novice

Tom Write and I were sent to haggle for supplies
Alexandria is full of bazaars offering rugs trinkets
mounds of orange and yellow spices
every vegetable you could imagine

watched a hospital ship sail for England
Tom says he longs for the sight
of green fields

glad to hear you are hale and hearty
love to yourself and the children

enclosed a postal order for one pound
buy yourself a present
something useful Flo

many happy returns on this your birthday

Mrs Casy

turned on the gas
laid her head on the pillow

it was too late
when Harry the blacksmith's son

forced the lock
and dragged her out

old McCabe
said

“Suicides don't have funerals
or other such malarkey

council ditch 'im
in a gulley

beyond the wall
at Waikumete

night like this
it's the banshee

you need
to be scared of

rattling windows
keening”

coming home
down cutty grass track

“Jesus
Harry whispers

the way that dog
howled

you’d swear
you’d swear she knew

Mrs Casy’s son
was never coming home”

December 1941

Mt Eden

Run run
over the sand hills

jump
into the crater

boom-mm
Jerry's dropped
a load

Cissy's
crying

"Scaredy cat!
scaredy cat!"

it's starting
to spit

we sit
under the pines

I tell them
Dad brought home

an Eytie prisoner's
dog tag and

a real live
hand grenade

Pat says
his brother

killed
five Nazis

with his
bare hands

Nachtigall

The attic
is silent

darkened windows
welcome light

the small grey bird
no longer sings

the cage
is empty

there is
no bread

in Zydowska St

On his Father's Side

A village
thinned
by two wars

an uncle
in the asylum

cousin
marrying
cousin

the year
the well ran dry

Out West

they ram-raid
shops

grow marijuana
hydroponically

neighbours
give us the finger

we live
in Ranui St

but can't pay
the rent

stand away
from the window

God spielers
are coming

door
to door

let's fly
to Brisbane

sell wild flowers
by the roadside

Outside John Court's

Cheering
grows louder

marines
guns on shoulder

march
up Queen St

crowd
pushes forward

Admiral Gormley
waves

from
an open jeep

above us
the Murphy girl

climbs out
on the sill

of an office
window

shouts
"Hello sailor"

Aunty Ivy says
“If that’s what

the nuns
teach them

even if we could
afford the fees

I’m glad
I never sent Grace

to St Mary’s”

1936

His panache caught her
on the rebound

saying with flowers
he could make things happen

on their wedding day
she wore white

hoped for
happy endings

despite an Indian saddle
bought from a circus

a lawyer's daughter
he took riding

in the mountains
while the weather held

six months on
dealing with absence

everything her mother said
about him true

she spoke out of turn
concerning a letter

her lip needed stitches
the day war began

Paris 1939

With Rachel
and Lillith

walking
in the park

coffee
at Omar's

champagne supper
at hotel Ritz

dancing
dancing

the New
Year in

friends said
"Sell what you can

take the boat
to America"

we did not
listen

those
girls

those
beautiful girls

Posthumously

manilla
folder

marriages
births
divorce

on the back
of a torn envelope

Black Cat Café
Rua Benjamin
San Miguel

Irish Times
newspaper clipping

near accident
veteran Air Ace
lands damaged plane

log
book

last entry
Weston to Shannon

whiskey
flask

photograph
girl in a Gypsy Moth

from Rosemary
with love

Saturday Arvo

They've sent me
to eat my scone

on the back
step

I'm cold
it's starting to rain

Aunty Joyce
whispers

"Cheer up
it will soon blow over"

Dad's run off
to the pub

Mum is sweeping
up glass

split off its hinges
our front door

will never
be the same

Pop says "It's this war
this dammed war"

Shelter

When the whistle blows
form single file

march in an orderly fashion
to the shelter

someone whispers
“It’s dark in here”

“Weta”
Jenny McPherson screams

Fishie punches Tim
Tim kicks back

teacher’s pet
Pamela Green

has to be carried up
for air

Mr Melrose says
“We have naught to fear”

he has his Home Guard
Tommy gun at the ready

above
in the playground

the primers are singing
God Defend New Zealand

Skipping Rope

“Ride a cock
ride a cock

ride the big
horsey

there’s a wee dote
there’s a wee charmer

if you cry
if you scream

no one
will hear you

dirty
wee whore

if you tell
your Mammy”

Skipping
rope

nettles
by the door

bread
in the oven

sweeties in a jar
if I were Gretel

Spring

So

Put on your

Razzle dazzle green spring though

Itinerant winds recall winter

No one is fooled by your capricious sun

Glitzing spilled out raindrops you throw at us

Standing Room Only

Computer
down

cellphone
out

traffic
jam

can't find
the kids

kettle
burnt dry

no water
in the garden hose

strangers
are gathering

on our
lawn

forget about
supermarket shopping

library fines
the divorce

on Keppel St
they're waiting for God

shade
your eyes

the ozone hole
is larger this year

I want
to shout

“Is this life after life
after death?”

Strangers

The children in London
are turning into distant relations

I have not met their friends
or who they share their love thoughts with

over midnight oceans their voices tell me
December 20th is eight below

snow in Maidavale
is magic

I have folded their wearable selves
in boxes wide taped

why this ritual hoarding
when likely they will say bin it?

I write about the weather
a friend of mine who died

remembering
that they never knew her

tear up the page
and start again

today I paint a picture
of islands

a clipped blue sea
jostling windsurfers in the bay

a ragbag of home talk
lest they forget where they belong

Synaesthesia

Unfamiliar places
buildings

my own
shadow

dark
under bridges

river
stream

Einstein
may have understood

the invisible barrier
that isolates

I said I love you
do I have to say it again?

“Blues
black velvet”

Synaesthesia
another modality

turn off the music
I want to smell the roses

faces their complexity
a foreign language

I put my fist through the door
you go shopping

you'll regret this
you laugh

as you wave
the cheque book

Green makes me nauseous
yellow freezes

your touch is like spiders
crawling on my skin

why would I buy you
flowers?

Sparrows

I am old
said the lay sister

I may listen
for the dawn

and not
rise for prayer

sit by the fire
with Sister Absolem

grow fat
as a bishop

never have to scrub
a refectory floor

or polish
the brasses

I am given honey
on my bread

from the
infirmery window

I watch brother hare's
March dance

forget about
the washing

when the weather
is mild

I turn my face
to the sun

to dream
of heaven

where oak leaves
are silver

and need no
raking

where sparrows
wear purple

Dublin Records

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Rory Maginn Anchorman | drowned in the Liffey |
| Unnamed woman child | on the road in bad weather interred together |
| Damian Lynch Publican | blown up in a raid |
| Joseph Rafferty Groom | hanged for strangling a Maid |
| Matthew Blunt Private | shot by a sniper |
| Josephine Ellen Lenane | fell off a tram |
| Babba Magill Lunatic | at peace in Glasniven |
| Michael Dillon Teacher | force fed in Mountjoy Prison |
| Patrick Doyle Grave Digger | scarlatina |
| Orlando McBride Clown | the tent burned down |
| Michael Larkin Labourer | starved in a ditch |
| Mary Anne Kavanah Shirt-maker | daubed with feathers and pitch |

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Nhora Kelly Servant | child bed fever |
| Maria De Ath Infant | devoured by rats |
| Edward Camp Drummer boy | defending the crown |
| Noah Hope Records' Clerk | wrote them all down |

The Father I don't Remember

merchant
seaman

five foot
eight

grey eyes
fair hair

fresh
complexion

scar on right side
of throat

served on
S.S. Browning

wounded
in action

discharged
Liverpool '41

battleship tattooed
across his chest

did you run away
with the circus

stab a man
in a brawl

in San Miguel

sail the yacht
home from Wales

single-handed

had flying too low
over Dublin

become passe?

Sunday Afternoon Man

Turn down
the bed

curtain out
the light

despair
in your

flaccid
silence

shoes quake
celibacy

and fine
leather

The Night the Big Top Burned

At dawn she sips claret
cooks him a fry

dreams of life
in sunny Andalusia

later she'll wax her legs
mend his tights

wash out
their spangles

Can he trust her
to handle his safety harness

if she's having an affair
with a Spanish roustabout?

the wine rack is empty
last night she marked the bottle

accused him
of silent drinking

Across the water
we could see the big top

Tom said if he had money
he'd buy the circus

so we could get in
free

when the music stopped
we heard voices

a man's voice
a woman's voice

down
by the river

the night the Russian
tight-rope walker drowned

the night
the big top burned

With a Bit of Practice

“He could
back-flip

like them
circus Johnnies

ran with the goats
he did

caught ’em too
by crikey”

When the valley
was bush

before
the war

before
the mine

Under the Weight of Applause

The tent must
come down

last night's lover
forgotten

trucks
caravans

wheel out
the sun

the pretty
Chinese contortionist

waves
a smile

Porirua
Lower Hutt

Cook Strait
ferry

clown shoes
blister

city
to city

Ward 10

There was Quinn
the alcoholic

Freeman
who murdered
his mother

a clerical student
Breen

accused
of unnatural
acts

escape
Freeman said
two halves make a hole

crawl
through it

Quinn believed death
was the answer
but coming back was hell

the night Breen
tricked Freeman

into thinking
he was going home

on Sunday Freeman cried

We're British

Mr Gertz
was Hitler

breaking a window
seven years'
bad luck

nuns were
penguins

cutting through
the convent
a dare

a tram ride
cost a penny

listening
to the Sally Band
play

Onward Christian Soldiers
a Sunday event

in the paddock
behind O'Gara's
timber yard

Britain
was winning the war

Eyties
were cowardly
bastards

the scabby kids
who ran their trolley

down Union St
bog Irish

What about

the stillborn
child

the
groundsman

cleaning
his spade

the doctor
driving home

to an empty
house

the
woman

in a padded cell
crying

down
evening

Ashes

Scatter
me

on a winter's
evening

let strong winds
take me

across
the bay

where
turbulent gulls fly

westward
to the Island

and the last
ferryman

rows swiftly
homewards

retain
no grief

as you part
with me

catch your breath
salt spray

as
I dance

on your
grey green waves

absolve
me

make me
your own sea



Glossary and Notes

Shamfeign – ‘the duplicity of glamour & a play on the word champagne,’ Alice Hooton invented this word in conversation at Eye Street Poets.

A Pair of Skates Relates to the fairy tale of the Snow Queen and also, to the now disproven theory of the unresponsive mother being responsible for autism in their child. Please see - Enhancing Conventional Medicine: Alternative Medicine’s Place in Treating Autism by Lewis Mehl-Madrona, M.D., Ph.D.

“... we had come a long way from Bettelheim’s refrigerator mother theory of autism (in which a cold, unresponsive mother was the cause of the condition), [but] we were stuck ... Parents of autistic children convinced me that everything I learned was wrong, to everyone’s benefit. Freed from the fetters of training and pessimistic professors, I discovered that children with developmental disorders have rich social and communicative lives Attentive parents naturally learn this secret language of their autistic children without even realizing this amazing feat. ...” <http://www.upsidedownschoolroom.com/autismspectrum.shtml>

Invasion

Rath – a house

holy wood – the druids considered some woodlands holy.

Tower – one of Alice Hooton’s ancestors built a Norman keep, he was Cruice.

Crows – these represent the Morrigan who is the Goddess of War in Eire.

CAFE BLACK CAT Found poem with original spelling, using a South American advertisement from San Miguel on an old envelope c. 1938

Belsan Belsan For a friend in the circus who lived in the forest during Hitler's war.

Ellis Island Found poem from a book of Ellis Island records, (USA).

On the SS Campania Inspired by Alice Hooton's grandmother who along with her brothers and sisters crossed the ocean, from Liverpool UK to New York USA, 11th November 1905.

When I Reach Sleah Head Sleah Head is in Kerry, Eire and from there is a look-out to the Blasket Islands.

Marazita Camp Found poem from a letter sent by Shadrack Hooton to his wife Florence, (he was Alice Hooton's husband's grandfather).

Darwin's Burning Waitaki is a Pakeha abbreviation of Waitakerie, a range of mountains in Tamaki Makaurau Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand.

Synaesthesia "Synaesthesia is often described as a joining of the senses. Sensations in one modality (e.g. hearing) produce sensations in another modality (e.g. seeing colour) as well as its own response. Synaesthetic experiences are often driven by symbolic rather than sensory representations, such as letters, numbers and words. It is also often experienced in the absence of external sensory input, such as along with one's inner speech." <http://www.uksynaesthesia.com/whatis.html>

Note from editor and publisher Raewyn Alexander - some may think these poems could be in three sections, those re Hitler's war, then immigrants settling in the USA and lastly, personal and family poems, however the three main themes are interwoven and relate in part to the poet's personal and family history, so Hooton's poetry is arranged as if the verses are her side of stories recalled during in a long conversation.

