

## LIMERICK

1st

I once knew a choosy old hunter,  
Who was offered two steeds by a farmer;  
He couldn't decide  
Which one he would ride,  
So he opted instead for a heifer.

John Meurig Edwards

2nd

There once was a fussy old spinster  
Who bought new-laid eggs from a farmer;  
She couldn't decide  
Between scrambled and fried,  
So she had three of each for her dinner.

John Meurig Edwards

3rd

A Monmouthshire wench who was tarty  
Met a wealthy old man at a party  
But she couldn't decide  
Till he took her aside  
And showed her his big Maserati

David Eyles

A submission by last year's winner, Mike Greenhough, was not placed, but is far too good to miss:

A bull had a cow-friend called Emma  
Whose bovine twin sister was Gemma  
Since he couldn't decide  
Which to take as his bride  
Life was just one long horny dilemma.

## POEM

1st

### **Rain**

Pen Cerrig-calch is black against the grey  
wind-shredded clouds. Along the lane the trees,  
leafless, provide no shelter from the sky's  
sad tears, which mingle with my fading dreams.

Behind, the Blorengwyl wears his cold fleece cap,  
his solid summit lost within the mist.  
Memory alone can conjure up the track  
from car park and bleak lake on to the heath –  
past the wild ponies, their flying manes and tails  
banners of freedom once, now weighted, wet,  
as backs towards the wind they stand and wait.

I turn again and walk along the lane,  
pitted and puddled by winter's greedy frosts  
but here and there a daffodil pokes through  
the dreary roadside mud, brightening the way  
and nodding stiffly in the wind's sharp gusts.

Pen Cerrig's veil draws silently aside,  
– reveals the Crug, a silhouette of light,  
and there above the ever-grazing sheep  
the rainbow's golden promise beckons me.

Margaret Jones-Robinson

2nd

### **Rain**

Drought!  
It had withered their crops,  
Killed their goats.  
Daily the women walked further and further  
In their search for water.  
And still the people hoped,  
For hope was all they had.

Rain!

It came at last, poured down from the sky.  
The people sang and laughed,  
Caught the precious water  
In plastic bowls; battered buckets; rusty petrol cans.  
And the rain kept coming,  
All day, all night; on and on.  
Rivers filled; overflowed; burst their banks;  
Turned into raging maelstroms.  
Swept away the huts, the shanty homes.  
Those few who survived had nothing,  
Not even hope.  
For the rain had destroyed their hope.

Shirley K Shirley

3rd=

### **Rain**

I had been given the title Rain.  
It lay, a tiny hard seed, on the dry ground  
Of my keeping, from early spring until  
Now, a hot evening in late May.

There had been a feeble shoot, something  
Involving an ark and a rainbow.  
It withered within the hour.

A stronger had followed: a metaphor  
Where rain is grief and drains all colour  
From the landscape of our lives.  
I failed to nurture that pathetic fallacy.  
It proved a mildewed leaf that crumbled  
In my fingers like a moth.

Now, suddenly, the air tightens around me,  
Shakes with the huge noise of thunder.  
The seed has cracked and from its vast chasm  
A jagged tree of lightning reveals  
Great-bellied clouds. A silence.  
A single beat gathering to a pounding roar.  
Look! The Rain Poem is here.

Helen Thresher

3rd=

**Welsh Rain is different.**

I remember meeting Welsh rain, in its own country,  
Halfway across the old bridge, solid and muscular  
Not like the new one, slender, effeminate, French.

My mother took me to the Valley where she grew,  
Nourished by rain, the Pit head grey, the slag heap  
mountainous ,glistening,  
the Chapel sung through, drizzled in.

For Welsh rain is not of the English kind  
That scatters people behind gates and private hedges,

Welsh rain drives us like sheep, together, in the Caff,  
isn't it ever wet Daph, sharing Tea and Bara  
And the children drawing circles on the windows  
chasing drops down the glass.

Its never still raining.

In the corner the holiday child, been to the shop,  
hoping the rain won't stop so he can sit in the cosy and dry  
building a Spitfire with Dad.

And Mother will complain about the glue and the smell  
And the Welsh weather.

For Welsh rain is different.

Don Grant