

**The Feathertale Review** (online edition)

Jessie Tierney

Editor: Brett Popplewell

October 2007

Web Address: [www.feathertale.com](http://www.feathertale.com)

What they Publish: Humorous short fiction, flash fiction, nonfiction, and poetry

Submission Guidelines: Submit humorous short fiction (under 3,500 words) and poetry (no more than 4 poems) to editor Brett Popplewell at [submissions@feathertale.com](mailto:submissions@feathertale.com) as an attachment, with “Review” included in the subject line. Feedback will be given in three months.

Description of Publication: “A confusing and disorganized forum for writers, poets, and artists to showcase their genius,” says their website. Sharp, fun, elaborate and well-designed online publication (also publishes a print edition—online submissions automatically qualified to appear in print version), with fun monkey cartoons (and other art) throughout the site. Published annually, it offers a number of contests throughout the year—check their website for contest details. Mostly (but definitely not exclusively) Canadian writers. Lots of stories about travels or adventures, lots told in first person.

Prose Per Issue: 100% prose except for the cartoons and art, which are often designed to accompany or illustrate your story. Approx. 12 stories per issue.

Prose Reviews:

*A Dip in Hemingway’s Pool*, by Richard Taylor is a plainspoken personal essay (“a true story” according to the contents) in an exotic setting. The writer is doing research for his book on swimming with writers called *Water and Desire*. He takes a tour of Hemingway’s house, which is full of “gnarly decedents of Hemingway’s cats,” complete with a cat cemetery with names like Marilyn Monroe and Frank Sinatra on the tombstones. While we tour with Taylor, he paints an almost snide picture of Hemingway’s life. He ends the story by crossing a chain that keeps people out of the pool to take a dip, with mixed reactions from the other tourists, and annoyed threats from the tour guides.

Taylor’s prose has a hint of snarkyness. Taylor relays his realistic story of illegal pool-swimming (infused with odd tidbits and facts about Hemingway) through simple straightforward language and specific concrete details: “I eased forward with a slow, ardent breast stroke, swimming with Hemingway, who often took a half-mile dip before dinner, then read in the evening after a day of writing chapters of his Spanish Civil War novel.” Though the tone wasn’t my style of humor, the story was still entertaining and I learned a bit about Hemingway.

*My Best Friend Patrick* by Claire Griffiths is a realistic first-person story told from the vantage point of a young English schoolboy. Patrick goes to a small school with his best friend, also named Patrick. When his best friend doesn’t show up to school for over a week, he investigates. Old Lady Murphy, his best friend’s cranky neighbor, came out when he knocked on the door. She is deaf in one ear, and kids can call a “mentalist” on a dare if they’re standing on her left. She says that Patrick is gone (his mum’d run off with “that filthy prossie bastard”). Back at school, when Patrick calls Roy (a boy who is taking his best friend’s place in football) a prossie bastard, he gets into trouble and receives a lashing. At the end, he still misses Patrick.

I laughed out loud—the exaggeration and liveliness of Patrick’s voice pops off the page. An interesting dialect and playful approach (Patrick’s young perspective) turns this mildly tragic story into an entertaining comedy with heart: “I miss him sometimes though—but not in a girly way, you understand?”

Rating: 6. Feathertale likes snarky-funny stories that incorporate a slight change in the main character. If you get published, someone will illustrate your story. They contributors range from “a hack who spends his days churning out reviews to a largely disinterested audience” to “an illustrator and writer working out of Toronto”—quite varied. Be sure to read a few stories to pick up on the type of humor they like to put out.