

# Inside Out

## Every Girl Has Her Limits: Previously Unpublished Poems, 2000 – 2008

By: Jolen Whitworth (Review: Rebecca Atherton)

*UKA Press Poetry, 2009*

American poet Jolen Whitworth currently resides in a small village in West Yorkshire, where she claims to be “living the dream” with her poet-come-postman husband James. Her past, however, tells a different story, as her poetry illustrates.

Creation  
and Creator,  
I am nurse, cursed to  
apply band-aids  
to the world's hurt.  
*Vessel, p11.*

Divided into five sections, *Every Girl Has Her Limits* reads as part of a personal pilgrimage, the poems serving as containers within which to safely confront the past.

In tempest silence and rapacious tones,  
I'm lost under a storm of the unsaid,  
To stumble over threshold's edge alone  
And sever from Thrall's shoulder Freedom's head.  
*Vacancy, p15.*

This therapeutic process allows despair and depression to be named and overcome, loss examined and indulged, loneliness explored, hope permitted permission to grow, and love embraced as the ultimate goal.

Despite my penchant for being restless and wild,  
Your grace granted contentment to this dark child.  
*Dark Child, p105.*

Having survived the unbearable – an overly controlling mother, the claustrophobia of a backwater town, cancer, a drug addiction, divorce, and a rare sleep disorder – Jolen has managed to successfully pull together the broken pieces to reinvent herself, demonstrating that, in spite of life's inevitable challenges, there is optimism to be found in the darkest of moments. A journey through the multi-faceted landscape of human emotion, *Every Girl Has Her Limits* is ultimately rewarding, a pleasure and a privilege to read.