

# Shiny Side Out

You taught me  
It was fine to dance alone  
push back the terrors  
explore my inner minx  
dig deep to excavate buried joys  
permit the lightest fingertip trickles  
on sun kissed skin  
trace the nape, slip hips, tap heels  
in sync to heart stopping beats  
sing, dream, let go.

You taught me  
it was time  
to express ideas stored in recesses  
long since forgotten,  
to experiment, find merriment,  
I used to be strong  
you reminded me I still am.

You taught me  
I didn't need permission to be  
rather more pressing to remain, free  
question everything  
have the courage of conviction,  
see life from an alternate view  
through a different lens  
to stay awake  
speak from the soul  
stand for the self  
and how not to be cold.

You taught me  
to walk and talk again  
whipped me gently from afar  
sometimes I talked to excess  
that desperation to express  
long-locked-in notions of woes  
gifts, all-seeing eyes, loss, moonlit words  
in blue-black skies, love.

You taught me  
it was just grand to have a hand held  
grasped and warm  
basking in yonder glow of yearning  
for yesteryear contentment.

You re-taught  
then brought back my smile

it's still there,  
every time your initial flashes up  
on screen  
and I pick up to hear you say,

"One foot in front of the other."

**Kate O'Shea** is a poet and photographer from Enniskillen. She has written a first book of poems titled *The Human Condition* and is working on a second book during these stay-at-home days of lockdown, though she admits it is something of a work in progress.

Kate is a proud co-founder of *The Thing Itself*, a social event which supports artists from far and wide in poetry, spoken word and song.