

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.