

North of the Border

Tartan tins of shortbread, Dr Finlay on TV
Men in kilts with bagpipes, that's what Scotland meant to me
Growing up in the south and west it seemed so far away
In a harbour town on the Cornish coast, miles from Tannochbrae.

I'd heard of Scotland's beauty, her mountains and her lochs
The mighty ships of Clydebank gliding from her docks
The infamy of whiskey and all that it can do
Though highly prized by connoisseurs, almost a sacred brew

The list of Scottish football teams as Dad filled in the form
Sounded so exotic, a long way from the norm
Hibernian, Kilmarnock, Celtic and Aberdeen
I loved the rhythm of their names, not the football scene

And then her troubled history, her battles and her kings
Union or independence, just one of many things
That bubble through her story as decades come and go
Lighting fires of fierce debate as feelings ebb and flow

The Hebrides and Fingal's Cave, the ocean's rise and swell
The crashing waves, the spray of foam, a scene I knew so well
The skirling pipes, the beating drum, the swinging skipping dance
Scotland's music calls to me, whenever there's the chance.

But there is just one Scottish thing I could do without
When I watch the forecast there can be no doubt
So much rain and wind and snow from Ayr to Lossiemouth
There's only one conclusion, I'm happier in the South !

Jan Rees January 2021