

## Clear, Blue Waters

by Lee Stoddart, 05/07/20 (v4)

A solitary bubble gently floats upwards, to surface on the placid loch, as the pale, dawn light slowly surrenders to a late-spring day. Watercolour washes in orange and pink give way to wispy-wool clouds gambling over fresh pastures of azure; reflections mimic their frolicking on clear, blue waters.

There is no breath of wind to cause offence or stir the scene. All is silent.

Any other day, the heart-beat lapping of wavelets against such clinker hull as this would lull a fisher back to early morning slumber, until line tightens and a tiny bell rings the catch; but, today, goat-frayed mooring-line trailing, the boat drifts aimless on a current, until swept gently towards glacier-hewn granite shore.

Dipper momentarily rests on gunwale, head bobbing, before once again taking to air, to return to its frantic purpose, hunting amongst ice-cold streams.

In hypnotic, somnolent rhythm, prow tenderly breaks the shimmering surface, until keel scrapes coarse golden sand, gliding to a halt in shallows, beneath vaulted ceiling of dark green Trossachs forest. Forever in shadow, barren of sunlight, water a deeper green-blue.

In leaf-sieved, piebald light, there's no catch to carry off, today—nothing was reeled into the boat with, or without, a struggle; no monster-fish met its end, no tall-tale spun.

Soon, cars will speed along the fresh, black tarmac of the A82, circumnavigating prehistoric waters. Holidaymakers cheerily play at spotting Nessie in the morning light; locals go about their private business.

Ignorant of drifting vessels, intent only on their own frantic purpose, heads bobbing, seeing all yet missing everything, for want of a moment's tranquillity. Until tomorrow's dawn, when this nexus of stone, water and air will, once again, be silently alone, washed in watercolours.

**(294 words)**