

Bourne
toWrite...
creative writing
workshops

Joe Christmas

by Lauren Holstein

I met a magpie
named Joe Christmas.
She was already stuffed
but always glaring at me.
No cage nor case
no display –
just a fat cork
for her claws to bite into.
'A head of sable
Beak of onyx
Wings of night-ocean and liquid emerald
A belly made of snow.
She is constantly reflecting
the light
my expression
on the meaning of stillness
when you are draped
in shiny baubles and
propped on a windowsill.

She is a lot like Jesus.

She fed me wine, once
opened her beak for me
to drink from

She walked on water, once
She flew down chimneys, too
left gold coins and droppings

for a lucky family
now and then

And once, she says,
she stole colourfully wrapped boxes
from under a tree.
They flew out the chimney
one by one
as she flung
with a flighty strength
scattered over a manicured lawn.
She pecked the boxes until they lay
scattered, dismembered shiny things

A Barbie head here
A Microchip there

It was the masterpiece of her fighting life.

And now she stares.
Decorated and still.
Daring me to shine brighter.

Oh, Jo Christmas, let us pray

I will fling my jewels and armour away
I will lay
my head next to yours and ponder
with you
my own glass display.

