

# Mountain Writing Competition 2022

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize, Poetry

### Innocence

By Katya Bacica

Katya Bacica is a writer and bookseller from Edinburgh, who loves the calm and thrill of the mountains. If she doesn't have her nose in a book, she's juggling, bouldering, or seeking the wilderness.

*I cannot move.  
Trembling above the col, like winter's last flake  
of clear ice, under merciless wind,  
stripped clean of pride.  
I should have known.  
Should have feared the calm of our ascent,  
the lion's long patience  
as we stumbled blindfoot up the scree,  
when twisting an ankle is just a hiccup  
in an arsenal of potential violence.  
How could I have known,  
on a morning of warmth and birdsong,  
when I'd felt so real?  
How could I have known that I was not yet awake?  
Perhaps I'd only thought I was,  
until the incessant mauling of my coat,  
which drowns my own heart, reminds me why I stare  
at sun-touched peaks:  
to see the indifferent march of mountain time,  
to feel the fleeting spark  
of my life in their shadow.  
I am a raw soul  
When he takes my cold hands in his  
And pulls me to my feet.  
I cross the plateau, as if spurred,  
keeping away from the packed snow,  
so deceptively like the quartz  
that breaches the earth like a knuckle.  
I glimpse a watercolour landscape,  
remembered vaguely as a dream  
beneath the birling waterfall of cloud,  
and touch my hand to the cairn.*