

Also by Susan Noble and published  
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Poetry:

*The Dream of Stairs: A Poem  
Cycle*

*Inside the Stretch of My Heart  
Before and After the Darkness*

Fiction:

*A Flock of Blackbirds  
Drifting Between Empty Tramlines*

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**Collected Poems** by Susan Noble incorporates three collections of poems:  
*The Dream of Stairs: A Poem Cycle*; *Inside the Stretch of My Heart*; and  
*Before and After the Darkness*. To mark the fortieth anniversary of  
Susan's death, this book is being published in hardback, paperback  
and Kindle, making all her poems publicly available for the first time.

**The Dream of Stairs** was privately printed as a posthumous memorial volume  
in 1975, a year after Susan's untimely death in 1974 at the age of 31. Susan  
wrote the poems in batches of half a dozen or more from 1965 onwards in what  
she described as manic bursts of creativity. But these poems are anything but  
light-hearted, and even a first reading will reveal clearly that levity is not on  
the menu in a universe 'Where there are no jokes / And people do not pretend.'  
This revised, expanded version includes a large number of additional poems,  
all of which clearly fit within the cycle thematically and structurally.

Many of the poems in **Inside the Stretch of My Heart** were triggered by the  
quotidian experience of living and working in central London in the late 1960s  
and early 1970s, yet beneath the fragile surface of her acute observations of  
domestic and office life in the city, intensely spiritual insights are being played  
out, sometimes delicately, sometimes shockingly, but always movingly.

The poems in the third collection in this volume, **Before and After the Darkness**,  
were written in the early 1970s, and like those in *Inside the Stretch of My Heart*,  
include poems written in 1973 and 1974 in the months before Susan's death.

Susan's exceptional sensitivity is reflected in the prolific outpouring of poems  
to be found here. In these intense, haunting poems, she chronicles her personal  
response to the world around her, while vividly portraying the inner landscape  
of her mental and emotional struggle.

Two further companion volumes are being published: *A Flock of Blackbirds*  
(selected short stories); and her novel, *Drifting Between Empty Tramlines*.  
All profits from the sales of all six volumes are being donated to three  
charities: Mind, the Samaritans and Sane.

Facsimiles of the original typescripts and manuscripts are available  
online at: [www.aesopbooks.com/susannoble](http://www.aesopbooks.com/susannoble)

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*The Dream of Stairs*, p. 222.



COLLECTED POEMS SUSAN NOBLE

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# COLLECTED POEMS

# SUSAN NOBLE

AESOP POETS

*About the author*

Brought up in South London, Susan Noble, was the second of three children. Her childhood was enriched by being part of a large and closely-knit Jewish family. Unfortunately stricken by polio (then known as infantile paralysis) in her early years, Susan went through life with a degree of physical handicap which she was to overcome with courage and determination.

Educated at Croydon High School, Susan studied English at Somerville College, Oxford. After graduating, she worked in London, first at the Royal National Institute for the Blind, dictating books for transcription into Braille, and later at the National Central Library in London, where she qualified as a Chartered Librarian.

Facsimiles of some of the original typescripts and manuscripts that make up this book are available online at:

[www.aesopbooks.com/susannoble](http://www.aesopbooks.com/susannoble)

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