

CELEBRATING 60 YEARS
COLCHESTER ZOO
EST. 1963

I WENT TO THE ZOO

BY JESS JAMES

Around aged 3 is where we start,
When Colchester Zoo first captured my heart,
Memories with Mummy of rain soaked Goat feeds,
Of gold-sifting with Grandma as the sweat starts to bead.

Aged 5 Nanny Plum sponsored Sasha for me,
A Tiger, white and black, whom I so wish came to tea,
Summers filled with ice cream at the falconry show,
Winters spent watching animals play in the snow.

As I grew older my trips started to wane,
Until my sister and I got our gold cards again,
From carving pumpkins to Starlight Safari Nights,
Penguins and the Wrap Shack tend to our appetites.

Milly and I come here so often,
We've had keeper experiences that won't be forgotten,
Feeding Hyenas and having hugs with Aardvarks,
Giving Venus a snack, Gizmo having a lark.

The thing with loving a place so much,
Is that tears sometimes flow where the heart has been touched,
Billy-Joe, Naja and Rajang were some of our mates,
Tears of joy after lockdown, while keepers clapped at the gates.

I've seen Lions and Tigers, a Sun Bear or two,
Here at my beloved Colchester Zoo,
The years have been kind, full of train rides and fun,
The memories I'm certain are so far from done.

The thing really is, about this place and me,
That it holds such nostalgia and fantastic memory,
Of a time, of a place, of people now gone,
Colchester Zoo is my place, 60 years strong.

