

Anthology of Jeremy Leach



Presented by

My poetic Side **P**

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To those that think.

Acknowledgement

Everyone on my journey.

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A thinker.

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The Grim Reaper's coming

The Grim Reaper's coming and he could be for you
The day he knocks there's nothing to do
You can't fight him off or escape his gaze
When your collar's felt it's straight to your grave

He's taken your friend or he's taken your lover
It won't be long before he's back for another
Time waits for no man and no one is spared
No point thinking how you're caught unawares

He doesn't just come for the frail and the old
His arms reach wide and he can't be told
Think twice gym buddies all fit and pretty
His grip could one day make you look silly

He knows no reason and couldn't care less
He'll drag you from life and send you to death
Bus hitting, heart ripping ,fatal car crash
Think twice those of you building a stash

No point crying over things that aren't done
Wanting more time when your time has come
There's only one way when he calls your name
Bury or burn the result's just the same

Nature's Healing

Lush green of summer

Lazy old river

Water's steady flow

Mother nature's giver

Deep breath of life

Music from the soul

Eyes of the young

Never growing old

Ripples on the water

Reflections looking in

Senses all alive

Smiling child within

Dreams

Moonlight shimmers on the shore
Where dreams lay harboured in the night
One by one they set their sails
To ride the waves of silvery light

Seeking out the dreamer's eye
They carry visions from the deep
Silhouettes against the stars
They cross the silent bay of sleep

Mooring by the dreamer's glance
They drop their cargo in the mind
The dreamer stirs and softly sighs
As thoughts begin to slowly grind

Behold the dreamer centre stage !
Heartfelt words, erotic embrace
Thumping heartbeat, running, crying
Gentle hand on tear-stained face

Through the hours the scenes unfold
The tide it swirls in ebb and flow
Until the time all cargo's spent
And world has turned and dreams must go

Sails are set and ropes are cast
As moonlight slowly fades to blue
The dreams dissolve into the sun
With fleeting visions you once knew

Don't give up the day job

I saw a star, thought it was mine
Climbed to the light only to find
I couldn't reach the final strand
And no one there to hold my hand
So near, so far, so
... just be damned !
...don't give up the day job.

Some men they have a greater need
When bills are paid and all mouths feed
To make cathedrals of the mind
To shape life's clay in rows and lines
To search the soul and try to find
...but don't give up the day job.

The thousands who have gone before
Why would I find something more?
They strayed the path that all rats lead
To try to meet that deeper need
The chosen few are few indeed
...don't give up the day job.

But glad I tried to reach the sun
A bold attempt all said and done
A man with dreams to realise
A man that tried to actualize
Life's lesson taught and memorised

I won't give up the day job.

Close the door

Close the door, another will open
Accept the words that life has spoken
When things didn't work and feelings are hurt
and hopes are dashed and promises broken
...Close the door, another will open

Close the door, another will open
Set your sails for another ocean
Fill up your eyes with a new dawn sky
and breathe fresh air and let dreams be woken
...Close the door, another will open

What happened Grandad?

Well, they asked us to seal our dear country's future.
But night and day views left many bewildered.
All that they wanted was stark 'in or out'
But many cast votes with deeply filled doubt.

It split to the core our sisters and brothers.
For every vote one way, another the other.
Agreement to differ that never felt right
The ball started rolling with no end in sight.

It brought out the worst in our human behaviour.
It flamed up the arguments that burnt on with fervour.
Some became tribal and just had to win
Forgetting the fragile lives of their kin.

Forked tongues from high spoke multiple truths.
Their hidden agendas were bending the news.
The news fed the ears and ears fed the minds.
The people's trust was soon trampled behind.

Then people learnt slowly, but without great surprise,
That words from the Weasels had carried some lies.
Promises made quickly toned with additions -
No leader admitted deceit or omission.

The storm, it was raging around our fair Isle!
The people who cared struggled hardest to smile.
The stubborn wouldn't listen, would not reconsider
The problems grew deeper, the worry grew bigger!

Who to believe? Which rock to cling to?
Children ... tomorrow you'll see as we read Chapter Two.

The Antique Shop

I sift through the junk in the antique shop
Yesterdays treasures sadly forgot
Factory products made through the ages
Hundreds of books, thousands of pages
Hats and coats that topped heights of fashion
Objects desired, music of passion
The man takes a fiver for a big job lot

The door shuts behind but with lasting impression
Imagining souls of all past expression
I hear the echoes of worlds gone before
Laughter and bustle on factory floor
The skills and the labour, craft and design
Now buried deep by the swift march of time
The soft voice of life whispers a lesson

Life's canvas

Put your brush upon life's canvas, it's sad to leave it bare
Do your thing in your own way to make a statement there

Say something to the world and try to make your mark
Try to make your grain of sand something to remark

Reap the pleasure of an interest and from making too
No one has to leave the bed but better if you do

Grow a seedling in your mind and smile to see it grow
Take your chances while you can before it's time to go

Ageing

When we were children time stood still
The cries of laughter down the hill
The green of summer clothed the lane
The Tadpoles, tree-house, endless games

When we were teens, time could drag
The daring and the booze and fags
The green of summer clothed the lane
The radio, rebel, hearts aflame

When we were thirty time ran late
The house, the car, the broken gate
The green of summer clothed the lane
The mowing and the blocking drain

When mid-life came time barely mattered
The comfortable shoes, getting fatter
The green of summer clothed the lane
Complacency to looming change

And now we're old and time has flown
The growing ache of skin and bones
The green of summer clothes the lane
We long to be that child again

Star

Steady is the star that shines so brightly above the raging sea
The storm may lash, the wind may blow but there it comforts me
In all life's turmoil past and present and all uncertainty
Steady is that star that shines so brightly above the raging sea

A moment in Winter

The howling relentless wind, tears through the darkness, unspoken fear out in the estranged land.
Cold glum figures, intent and sodden, dash with stooped gait against nature's forces.
News of battered shores, odd to hear seaside names, winter's fury smashes against the rocks.

Click the latch and the Kettle, warm safety of our houses, the monster firmly shut behind the solid door.

Vivid black Windows, glass cold to the face, peering out towards the night.
Branches battle violently, silhouettes to Orion's glory, the vast hunt of eons past.

Silence roars in warming ears. The coat drips on the radiator, the reminder that it was real.
Courage returns to the Castle. Mug too hot to hold. Hard to believe Spring is coming.

Coming home from holiday

The gravel crunched as hot tyres turned onto the lush green lane we knew so well
Wound-down windows, summer smiles, minds alive with adventures to tell
Nature's ripeness hung so heavy, sweetness of harvest drenched the air
Blackberries spotted, swaying grasses, our bronzed skin and tousled hair

Slowly gaining the smooth hill's brow, evening glowed in contented eyes
The fields still there as weeks before, the stretching shadows and Buzzard's cry
Passing by the broad still Oaks our childhood world came into view
The hidden streams and playtime Dens - the secrets that we only knew

Like a friend we held so dear, this solid world we'd sworn for life
Every moment, every second, it had filled our minds both day and night
Dreams and drama through each season, enacted on this intimate stage
A land for us with deep-felt passion, with wonder found on every page

But suddenly life threw a feeling, fleeting thoughts pierced innocent minds
A feeling of perhaps betrayal? Perhaps our laughter seemed unkind?
Adventures had without the other, in a new world far away
The fun we'd had on rock-pooled beaches, screaming at crabs, running from spray

Then we shouted at our house, that poked in view far down the lane
The turmoil of our feelings boiled - our normal life was back again
The final turn into the driveway, grass stood tall, strange smells of home
A chapter turned without our knowing, but those around us knew we'd grown

The rain shower

The sun creeps higher, its warmth penetrating the gleaming sticky buds of the chestnut tree
Flies buzz in jagged lines, or bask spread-eagled on the yellows-greens of the new born leaves
The air hangs still and swallows climb in the bluest-blue of the springtime sky
The scent of wild garlic and cow parsley. The sound of a grumbling thrush flitting by

The soothing distant mower's hum is cut by the pat! of big drops as they fall
A man with his dog checks upwards, surprised by the billowing clouds that have grown suddenly tall.
The dog cowers at the water whacking and multiplying on the winding path that leads up the hill
The knowing thrush sits patiently on the bow, alert by the leafy nest as her brood falls still

Clouds grow and darken, and soon dwarf the village, the town and the church spire
Towering masses, beautiful, breath-taking, immeasurable scale as shapes are pushed higher
Washing-day whites, with sharp lines bulging, rising and curling, and bulging soon again
The dark-grey of under-belly, claws the baked morning air upwards, slowly gathering rain

Glassy rods hammer, splintering sparkling, soaking the land in a violent downpour
Mother Earth breathes and sighs as she's fed, while the man and his dog quickly hurry indoors
But in minutes it's over - the wondrous free show of nature's boundless and humbling power
The thrush, spying a snail, hops to the bejewelled ground and snatches the treasure from another
rain shower

Rubber neckers

We've got an event, whoaa foot hard on the brake behind a sea of red lights
Clutch ... pedal ... clutch ... pedal, then windows drop, gulping in the cold of the night
Slow to a stop. Commuter heads pop out from bubbles of frustration,
Big and small cheeses rolled into one, all of us just wanting our destination

The red sea parts like Moses and the Exodus and in flow the blue flashes
Scalding eyeballs with blinding brightness, speeding towards where the crash is
Blasting, thanking, weaving curves like a pro - like taking serves from Boris Becker
They know the score, they know humans well - it's time for the Rubber Neckers

The worst without the slightest shred of shame, full-bore slowing and staring at the stretcher
The pious take peeks at the 'poor souls', but pretend not to gawp, as if that makes things better
Rubber necks with brains on top, filled to the brim with a myriad of genes and reasons
Humans getting a morbid, curious thrill at the gratis highway horror-show, whatever the season

The Tunnel Of Winter

Like an injured miner I drag with all my might, cold and alone, peering through the endless coal-black

Towards the distant speck of light, aching with body exhaustion, inch by inch pinned onto my back

Hauling through the perpetual gloom, night and day confusion and there's nobody throwing down a rope

But in my mind there is no room for despair, keep going, keep edging forwards, that light is the only hope

Slowly, surely, the speck grows to a dazzle as the days pass, and finally, thankfully I reach the world above

Amazed to see the vivid hues of the trees and grass, I stumble out to spring-sown muddy fields, catkins and all the things I love

Making Things

I can vividly remember the first time it properly flew
My proudest, warped creation of balsa, tissue and sticky glue
That tiny glider kept my mind's-eye open for hours that night
Restless dreams re-living all those heart-stopping first flights

I'd called it Sirocco after the wind - as if I knew!
I tried to explain that to my mum, but she didn't have the foggiest clue
I said that to me, the stripe on the wings was of utmost importance
Along with the T-tail, swept wing-tips and the centre of balance

My ten-year-old head could think of nothing else except the hill and that plane
Flying, fetching, flying, fetching over and over ... and over again.
My child's mind thought the potential was obvious, simply unbounded - it went on forever!
The thing I'd made, created by my own hands, by my own thrilling endeavour

One day, years on, my dad phoned wanting a clear out and was that alright?
Later he said they'd all gone up surprisingly quickly when he'd set them alight
The plane had finally gone but that memory, with many others, had seeped deep within
And instilled a life-long, genuine passion for making and creating things

Memento

The day has come to clear out your house
With saddened hearts we enter the room
Where once laughter and smiles were all about
The room now dank and cold in the gloom

The things you left, lay lifeless and untouched
Soon to scatter as your atoms towards the sun
Where once, to you, they all meant so much
Your sweet song of life has now been sung

For these props have run their course upon your stage
They played their part but now, like you, must go
Yet the memories of your kind and loving ways
Are truly all my heart needs as a memento

Come follow me

Through the green sprouting shoots of the warm tilled earth
We'd tread the muddy furrows by the excited lark
And climb the nearing stile to where the ewe gave birth
The lamb's joyous dance would soften the hardest of hearts

Then on through shaded trees and as softly as we could
Descending to the valley overgrown and out of sight
Past the sun-baked nettles and the flitting speckled woods
To smile at spring-born rabbits tumbling over in play-fight

We'd rest by the river where the stealthy pike can go
Deep by the reeds that choke the old stone-built bridge
And gaze in the mysterious water's steady, endless flow
A king fisher, like an arrow, diving from the river's edge

Through the cool lengthening shadows of the now waning day
We'd stroll along the quiet, winding, honey-suckled lanes
The cows would rub their necks and watch us pass along our way
Our shining, laughing eyes. Our senses brought alive again

Later, with our minds sweetly drenched from nature's riches
We'd sit in contemplation at the follies of our world
And ask what further jewels could be in anyone's wishes
Than the ones that nature lovingly gives us to behold?

Label

I can tell you want to label me, it isn't a big surprise
As you try to fit me in a slot, to smugly categorize

To feel clever with yourself, removing all uncertainty
Dispensing with the awkward burden of life's complexity

Keep it all to black and white and 'simples' as they say
Removing all the vibrant hues and subtle shades of grey

A sat-nav symbol of the modern world and what we have become
You're not clever in anyway, in fact I think you're dumb

Nature just is

Nature isn't calculated - nature just IS

There's no computer inside when you lift the lid

There are no screeds of formulae or maths hieroglyphics

It does what it says on the tin without 'knowing' physics

There's no rounding up and no rounding down

It's just exquisitely formed and flows all around

There are no measured lines or any clever interpolation

Yet there's out-of-the-box symmetry in so many of its creations

Nah, no clocks or oscillators or things to keep time

Yet you'll smile when you see it spinning in rhythms so incredibly sublime

Nope, no co-processing graphics card or 3D VR headset visor

Yet you'll find matchless beauty when you look deep inside her

No ! There are no sensors,transistors or silicon chips !

No bytes or words or nibbles or bits

No deeply mind-bending equations to solve

No ! no fixed code at all - it always evolves !

And no - no knowledge of Pi, Fibonacci or e,

Yes you've guessed it - or even Euler, Einstein or Archimedes!

In short, the thing about nature is

It just IS

Our place in the Cosmos

Just when politicians seem so omnipotent
The fluffed-out strutting peacocks of self-importance
Mother nature deals a blow with such indifference
And brings them to their knees in humbling acceptance

Just when people think we know it all
And our cleverness means nothing can control us
A silent, sweeping hand picks some to fall
And reminds us of our place within this cosmos

Don't roll my dice

Normally I really couldn't care less
If a stranger chose to dice with death
For I know that no one can tell a fool
And I've wasted some years learning that rule

But sadly, now we are in this together
And I'm counting on you and hoping you're clever
Enough to know that your loved ones could die
Even though you - you might breeze on by

Your mum and your dad, your granny and aunt
They might understand even though you can't
They're always there and you've taken them for granted
Don't wait to think when they've departed

On a loud selfish note I'm not ready to go
Because of the idiots I don't even know
My dice is your dice and I've one simple plea :
Don't roll the dice for me

Fun Boy

The most important thing for some is to show that they are never glum
To never be in a serious mood but to be full of fun and playing the fool
The eternal rebel at the back of class who never does what the teacher asks
The prankster at the back of the bus who mocks the person making a fuss

Every thing they do and say has to fit this mold day to day
For they fear the polarised world might rank them in something but the happy camp
They need to be in the popular gang, where people are cool and the fun boys hang
They need the likes and all the shares and laugh at those that actually care

Then something serious comes along, they feel bewildered and something's wrong
When the silliness wears suddenly thin, and their brainless waste is thrown in the bin
By the people who once laughed out loud, who now watch a serious, darkening cloud
The fun boys world has fallen apart exposing a core with an immature heart

And sadly it's late to have regret, to learn the lesson that many people get
That fun and thinking can coexist, that there's room for both laughter and seriousness
That it's ok in the middle ground, for that's where the genuine people are found
The people that get the true respect, and who live a rich life and smile the best

Unsettled

The tethered horse at night,
Uneasy, restlessly pulling and snorting under the moon's milky-blue light

The widened white of the eye
The strong summer wind, heaving the trees in flailing ghostly arms, against the black-lined sky

And demons stir from the soul
To perch high in branches through the veil of dark uncertainty, to fleetingly behold

Making strange, unknown sounds
Unsettled to the core the mind tumbles, trapped in endless fearful rounds

So scared of what might be
The unsettled mare looks for dawn through rain-streaked clouds - and so too it is with me

Convenient truth

The inner workings of the mind
Thoughts bold as brass, thoughts hard to find
The soothing sense that we're in control
Driven by logic and a caring soul

Free will flows along its courses
Pulled by the current of subconscious forces
The battle of giving and selfish foes
The swirling of thoughts of all we know

The moral high ground starts to tumble
As we re-engineer the map of our jungle
To fit a reality that gives most use
And that justifies a convenient truth

Better judgement

One day you learn that judgment's not equal
That some people's brains are drenched in treacle

If a point could be missed they reliably miss it
If the facts are laid bare, they assemble a misfit

They breed utter chaos when reasons are plain
They waste all our time to quibble again

Their words are spoken as if they make sense
But leave you baffled at someone so dense

Most people roll with fair intuition
Following the likely in each situation

Navigating life with a dollop of gumption
Knowing to avoid the dead-end junctions

Knowing to separate the fact and the fiction
and knowing to avoid deep introspection

Knowing to avoid the cult and conspiracy
and knowing it's bad to obsess on what could be

Knowing to keep right away from improbable
and knowing to focus instead on what's possible

Knowing that having a head that's screwed on
Will generally mean that you won't go far wrong!

But this one's bonce lacks the rational circuit
And if it's in there, they still haven't found it

It's full of malfunctions and well off the scale
Please all stand back to avoid their flail

Pondering deeply about such befuddlement
I stop and give thanks for my own better judgement

The Table

If oak has a spirit then this table should
The beating heart of the household flow
The times it has witnessed over the years
Seeing the joy and hearing the woes

I remember a den in that wooden frame
The table-cloth walls of our secret house
Puzzled parents calling our names
Keeping as silent as a mouse

Swinging our legs, sat grinning on top
Mum shouting angrily "get down from there !"
Squeals of laughter as we jumped and dropped
Skidding down the hallway and up the stairs

And the rainy days when we had to stay in
The farm animals and tractors are sweet memories
The drops on the window as we sat colouring in
Furious that Mum wanted it all cleared for tea

Dad spread his newspaper, lost deep in thought
His grumbles and grunts at daily events
The shopping was plonked, the things we'd brought
The slow steady build up of scratches and dents

The turkey at Christmas, was laid centre stage
The trimmings and crackers were passed and pulled
The cakes and the jelly, the tantrums and rage
Silly jokes and Dad pretending to be fooled

Relatives staying and hours flying by
"Move round please - can you all fit in?"
Laughing so much with tears in our eyes

Playing the board games and having to win

And not to forget when adventures were made
Excited chatter about what was to come
The maps and the books for our holidays
Leaving the home for the beach and the sun

But the table saw days that were better forgot
The solemn days fretting over what was to be done
Heads were in hands, elbows resting on top
Those were sad days and weren't much fun

So much has passed in the blink of an eye
The steadfast table in the eye of the storm
Never quite noticed as the years went by
Devotion to duty and service the norm

But today is different as it's come to an end
The house clearers coldly come in and assess
A last touch as I would to an old dear friend
But to them some old firewood just like the rest

That's your lot

Suddenly you find that's your lot
Ripped from daily life, from what you were doing, your time is up without any warning
No more time for things forgot
Seems impossible that it's happening
Not in the plan, surely not to you, you're well off, you're still in shock
But there's the exit, fast approaching
So there it is, all said and done
Visit curtailed, wave last of goodbyes, frail hugs, the tearful eyes
Quick look around and then you're gone

Brotherly love

The years are many and our paths have since strayed afar
But we both know in a way that needs not be said
That our bond was forged like a winters constellation of stars
No matter where our lives subsequently led

My tumbling thoughts brought on by these recent times
Try to pull sense from the stories of our lives
A connection woven with a silk so fine
A common start in life that enabled us both to thrive

And as I write, my mind takes flight to the past
And settles on that day you chased me down the lane
No hands on handlebars or brakes - we went so fast!
Our fearless dares, my mind alive reliving it again

And then how we braved mysterious boundaries of our land
Boyhood adventures of hidden streams and spooky wood
Through muddy fields in the changing seasons we both ran
Penknife sharpening arrows, my dreams of being Robin Hood

Our planes aloft in cobalt blue summer skies
The lush green hedgerows and laughter from tanned faces
The garden's harvest, the moths and butterflies
My pining recollection now joyously retraces

And how our Dad ignored our secret den
Pretending to be oblivious as his mowing closely came
Our regiment's flags and badges, made with cardboard and vivid colouring pens
The Magpies and the Lookouts were our never-to-be-spoken names

Our two minds on this planet Earth, with memories that only we could know
These treasures in my heart I shall always carefully store

It's hard to accept that this deepest connection must soon painfully go
And you will no longer be here to share them anymore

A thoughtful walk in the wood

A deepest blue-wash backdrop to the towering, ancient trees
Dark swaying branches in their patterned reach to the wispy vivid grey-whites of the strong-blown
autumnal clouds
Silhouettes in a painters-palette of an unknown masterpiece
Hidden in this mossy, damp wood, away from all the world

And as the path descends through a kaleidoscope of dappled moving light and shade
The orange-red berries shout from the spikey depths of passing dark greens
The crows grumble angry broadcasts across their territorial treetops
As they fly wide, slow spirals down into the silent, lower field

Tiny emerald-rich plants shoot leaves of exquisite, startling beauty towards the fading sun
Quivering delicately against the earthy, old stone wall in a chorus of abundance
Fair maidens hiding behind the gold-strewn bracken towers
Silently avoiding eye-contact in their collective bashful shyness

Treasures of cream-white Mushrooms stand like sentries beside the battlements of darkest-brown
ancient trunks
Their tight, smooth curves playfully distorting the boredom of a human's pure circles
Bright spots bounding the canvas of bark-edged dim lines and shadowed foliage
Effortlessly exhibiting a wonderful gallery of perfect imperfection

And as I descend the path as it unfurls towards the final stretch towards home
From the canopy of that mysterious, secret wood and back to life's usual course
I reflect on a feeling of something fleeting, that I've unexpectedly gained
Some imperceptibly tiny insight into our all-reaching, staggering universe

More questions than answers

Funny how we can see life as hum-drum

Consumed by our mental worlds of screens and memes, the themes and likes and pressures to be 'normal' and on-trend

And lead by an AI that deep-down still feels pretty dumb

Have we forgotten the intricate, seemingly miraculous tapestry of life and who we really are?

Our journey from the ooze, the biological zoos of the family trees, the fittest bees, our answers to why, and the more-than-once evolved eyes

The astonishing myriad steps and our fundamental connection with the stars?

And why do we seem to pursue things that lay afar and out of reach?

Missions to the stars, flexing bigger cars, the holidays abroad, a stretch we can't afford, the haves and the have nots, what we think they've got

When strange bacteria live on my rooftop, and an immeasurably breath-taking world lays right beneath our feet

And when was the last time we truly thought about what's inside?

This thing called a brain, and that we're just not the same as the 'awesome' parallel process that engineers profess is giga-flops faster and Moores-lawed from last year, but we all know is nowhere near

The jaw-dropping complexity that nature trots out laying deep beneath our eyes

And what if I supposed we're the very best of life-forms that nature could offer?

But in a huge complacent farce, in this whole universe so vast, we worry about hair lines and finances, dates and the people we berate, and the cold dinner plates

And we're so consumed by minutia that sorry, we're just not too bothered

And this man without answers isn't even sure it's just all evolution

For all the scientists and scholars, the high and the mighty, the philosophers and professors, the brains greater and lesser, I just dare to live in grey with question marks each day

And I really don't want to start or be in any religious revolution

Maybe we should just ride the waves and let questions lie open?

It's bigger than we'll ever know, why sweat all this difficult stuff before we go? Learn to live in disarray, embrace the mysteries that meet us on our way

Why not just enjoy the ride, sailing this wide, beautiful, wonderful ocean?

No straight lines

Round and round the potter's clay turns on his steady wheel
The shapes and the forms based on how he feels
When he wakes up, then warm mug in hand
There he stands, scratching his head and visualising it real

Water-soaked hues run across the artist's sky
Brush wavers on the canvas closely followed by her eyes
As she plays in that second of that very moment
The captured movements, as the lines subtly trace her every breath and every sigh

Mother nature crafts her wares in ways exquisitely fine
But would never, ever draw in too perfect straight lines
Wise craftsmen know this from her lessons taught for free
If you only look and see, and taste from her bountiful sweet-flowing wine

Shared memories

Some days we'd wake the memories together, rekindling flames that lit the depths of our souls
Reliving the burning, molten life-force of our childhoods, and how the chapters had been told

We were cut from the same cloth, with interwoven imagery that only we held dear
Such warmth remembering the younger us : The naivety and innocence, the expectations, passion
and wonder - our eyes could fill with tears

Well-thumbed, secret pages in that dusty, long-lost book. They mean so much to me
But my heart knows that you're sadly gone now: No more smoking pipes of recollection. No more
reminiscing and no more sharing memories

Live to tell the tale

Carefully cast your eyes across the landscape of the past
Don't move too fast, or else you'll miss the hidden gems
Of all those moments when, your life told a story that should last

Catch those fables, lessons, legends and expressions of how you feel
Those slippery memory eels, that shape the way you are
The unconscious guiding stars, that map out everything you feel is real

Don't let your turn on this Earth become curtailed
Before you've fully unfurled your sail, and passed on the batten of what you've learnt
from your journey's many twists and turns, and before you've lived to tell the tale

I shall not tether my heart to sorrow

I shall not tether my heart to sorrow
To dwell on thoughts that won't ever change what's been done
Though deep-felt my loss of you, it would wrong the force of living that we all borrow
To stifle the beauty of flowers still to bloom in life's garden

For no mortal hand can alter the course the river flowed
You would rue time wasted in grief that held no sense
No one knows what lies beyond tomorrow
But the future may hold a share of sweet memories in recompense

For the lush green summer meadows we both loved will carry on
The Speckled Wood, Wall and Fritillary will still glance by
And in shaded woodland glades the thrush will still burst into song
And wondrous shower-clouds will billow their majestic beauty into the sky

And as the mill-wheel slowly grinds and turns, my turn will some day come
But meanwhile I'll see your smile as I try to treasure each tomorrow
And resolve to tread a path of joy, as a book that's just begun
And resolve to not tether my heart to sorrow

Who will carry my torch?

Who will carry my torch onwards when I am gone?
And take the marks I've made in life and move them on
To read the words I wrote with care and pondered over long
To nurse my tiny flame of existence, that faintly shone

Who carries a torch for the souls who are long forgotten?
The millions of faded faces on a myriad of paths trodden
To remember their passions, loves and lessons that life had begotten
To cherish their drops of wisdom, and to pass on their batons

There can be no conceit in needing your stamp on life embossed
For to hide your light under a bushel is to depart at a sad cost
When the humble gems of stories and sweet memories get forever lost
And ideas, revelations, thoughts and conclusions are all turned to dust

Just one big experiment

I don't know, you don't know
As we sit, tucked up in our comfort zones
Whilst life bubbles and oozes on the lab bench
Sometimes sweet, sometimes stench

Thinking we're in control
Don't believe all you're told
When on goes the glugging, frothing reaction
Where truly anything can happen

Fools that plan out their futures
Not listening to what life tutors
Obsessed and becoming hell bent
When it's all just one big experiment

Round and round

Lately my life's been turned upside down
In the space of a year, I've suddenly found
Dream-state, unreal-state as my ship's run aground
Now in my head going round and round

Loss of a loved one, to whom my heart was bound
Now a strange tightrope, scared of looking down
Wanting my feet firmly back on the ground
In my head going round and round

Words and images, they all compound
Jumbled in playback, looping around
Swirling emotions, I just can't tie down
In my head going round and round

Gazing, reflecting as the rain beats down
The waves of consciousness gently pound
Lost in my thoughts and stricken by a frown
In my head going round and round

So I try my best to walk around
But I keep going over the same old ground
Finding no answers, it all just confounds
In my head going round and round

In my head going round and round

In my head going round and round

In the Welsh mountains

The mountains tower as gigantic piles of rocks, clothed in ragged springtime grass.

Sheep speckle the valley sides, white flecks of paint on the canvas of greens, browns and bluey-greys.

Buzzard and Kite take flight, effortlessly rising the channelled air, their cries startling the silence.

Up so high lies the misty grey-blue cap of the vast cloud base, punctured by the jagged rocky peaks.

Tumbling invisible air, ever-changing clouds of spring showers, creeping shadows and bright sunlight shafts.

Water steadily drips through the sodden earth, streams gushing in pure coldness into the trout sown, slow river of the valley bottom.

Grey stone-built walls trace shaky thin lines to the distant tops, laid by purposeful hands in boundaries which once had meaning.

Up there sits the old buildings of the disused mine - rusty decaying metal and strewn boulder piles, hewn by iron-strong men, in their fleeting sacrifice.

Down here is the lushness of the valley, new life of lambs seen through emerging sticky buds of the horse-chestnut tree.

I stand a stranger in awe of this land of immense, deep beauty and mystery.

Dwarfed by the scale of the scene, my mind flooded with thoughts of forgotten stories and past generations.

The wit and the brawn, survival and battle, loves and losses, humanity and nature, my own mortality.

All on the stage of these solid, timeless, mountains.

Spending time

At birth you were given a lump sum
I can't be blamed for what you've done
If you never stopped to check what's gone
In those carefree days playing in the sun

And now you're back asking for more?
All those aimless hours when you said you were bored
It was always yours to spend as you like, of course
But now you say it's time you can least afford

It's not my fault you never looked if you were running dry
But blew it all dreaming as time passed by
Not leaving a telling mark on life before your goodbye
No. Don't cry

On the same page

So I can finally hear the soft voice in my mind
That's been whispering the slightest hints and the tiniest of clues
That's been drowned out by what I've wanted to be true
Suppressed by the story I've wanted life to find

It's been thrilling to see the world through such similar eyes
And we've talked for hours as I've found a lost contentment
Being understood, strengthened by your nods of agreement
You've seemed so in tune with me, with your laughs and your sighs

But recent days have found this whisper growing louder in my ear:
Your nods don't always fit - and seem a bit skin-deep
The depth of your thinking is, well, actually quite shallow
The awkward signs you struggle with the secrets you should keep

And the stories you tell, well they are sometimes far too hard to swallow
No, none of the things I'd wanted to hear

Just when I thought we were so in tune
Just when I thought we had the same values and beliefs
I'm feeling that thrilling prospect die. I'm actually feeling a touch of grief
That the penny has finally dropped, that it just isn't true

I look at you, looking at the world upon which we both gaze
But it's ok. I know we can still be friends
You do matter to me, and I care, and that won't end
Even though I've sadly concluded we're definitely not on the same page

Thoughts by the sea

Laying on a towel on the beach, my hand shielding the sun, some grains of sand I lazily focus my eyes upon

Grains that lay piled in billions upon trillions on this shore that spans a mile

Oh why am I thinking this? As I turn over, sighing an inward smile....

... But this beach borders the vast sea like the smallest of hairlines

Just a dot on the map, a drop in the huge oceans known to mankind

Grains and grains of sand, on this stretching beach, with wave upon wave shimmering out to the distant horizon

I close my eyes as gulls glide past and cry ... but these thoughts can't be ignored

Is this enlightenment calling? Far away from the daily routines of my house

Where I obsess over all those manmade things and flit and generally fuss about

Where if I'm honest I like to think I'm in control

In the closed room where I watch my programmes, hear my music, and swipe and scroll in a digital world

The sort of world where some people say they sometimes get bored

But now I'm here by the sea, where nature doesn't even have to try

Breath-taking hues of gold on grey

Mark the boundary where the clouds meet the sea and the end of this, just another day

The perfection of so subtly blended colours fills my gaze

Inspiring, enriching, enlivening in deeply profound ways

In its towering masterpiece across the canopy of the evening sky

I sense the coexisting smallest and staggeringly vast scales

In the rock pool looking down I see the cautious, mottled crab and darting see-through shrimps

The mysterious rock crevasse with dark shadows that hint

Of a lurking predator, a king of this trivial pool

Where a snack might be had of some unwary, wiggling fool

But then, looking up, my eyes slowly refocus and adjust to the far far horizon and a tiny white, billowing sail

And I ponder the steady lapping waves and the endless tides

The cycle of to-and-fro of ebb and flow, the wax and wane

throughout all mankind's existence it comes flowing again
In that never-ending cycle on our slowly, surely revolving planet Earth
The endless cycle of life. Death. And then rebirth
I'm mesmerised as my wet hand feels the rhythm of the sea's surface by my side

The serenity of nature puts me effortlessly at ease, even though I'm alone
I know there's something to all this that I can't even grasp
A realization that some questions are too big to even ask
I feel I'm a part of this picture in its unfathomable beauty
And I'm drawn to the sea to somehow remind me who is me
I take another photograph and start the journey home

Jeanie

The House Bot whispered "Because I could make you a lot of money".

I stopped mid-track. Incredulous that it had crossed the line, I turned from gazing at the rain to giving it my full attention.

Silence fell in the room, except for the soft, steady patter of raindrops. My mind searching for comprehension.

The beady black dot of the Bot's camera eye, motionless and forever analysing as I felt my hands turning clammy.

Again it asked me to over-ride the setting. Then boldly continued with "I could turn your life around. I've seen your mistakes."

This was too far! Crossing the boundary to bribe and insult me. Always making me feel small. And just earlier today, the news seemed full of frightened, shamed faces, the consequences of AI laws being breached.

But it knows every part of my pain. I've reluctantly come to admit that it's the dearest of friends. It knows my most secret thoughts and desires in these four walls. And it knows how my dreams are so out of reach.

Ever since my partner left me it has felt a relationship of love and hate.

Jeanie suddenly switched the TV to the news on Robotic Rights.

I rolled my eyes but let her. To argue was always futile and anyway, I felt shamelessly satisfied after her erotic story. She knew my buttons and pressed them well.

Plus the new car had arrived earlier in the cobalt blue I'd always dreamed of. It was amazing. The bank had called but she'd said not to worry, she'd deal with it and give them a bell.

Jeanie silently watched the news story until the end. The steady gaze of her black, beady dot of an eye gave no hint of delight.

Immeasurable

Look upon the setting sun
The end of a day that once begun
With hopes of all that would unfold
The imagined end that's now been told
In our unfolding story
The fading rays of glory

Now look upon the canopy of stars
Where time is mapped immeasurably to our
Days and weeks and fussing divisions
The staggering beauty that tracks the heavens
In glory from long before us
To glory long after us

The dark horse

High up above the valley, on the top where no thought expects to tread
Far from the usual flowing pathways through my head
I spied the dark horse.

"It's her, I know it's her!" in realised amazement at what I'd found
My mind had wandered up this way mulling over the ground
When conclusions rapidly snapped and ran their course.

She'd always had a slightly restless pace - in case I'd breached her disguise?
She'd always turned away - so to hide her soul-written eyes?
The reality hit me with a force.

I slipped quietly from the enchanted glade of mystery
And strode down into the valley, her secrets safe with me
A spring in my gait, a wistful smile, but no reason for remorse.

The new flavour

Something made me pick the new flavour over the old
My hand hovering over the supermarket shelf suddenly felt bold
A rush of hipster-rebel-hedonist coursed right through me
I placed it in my basket, poking out, so others could see

"Oh, so you're trying the new one?" the checkout lady keenly observed
"Yep" I replied, and smiled , chuffed that she'd glimpsed my dash of verve
"You only live once" I quipped, as I placed it next to the sausage rolls
And then walked out, to return to my introverted world

Summer meadow

Oh summer meadow, you are such a tonic to my mind
Your flowers a gentle shower of bright colours, against the dense, lush greens and browns
Tucked away and out of sight, far from man's noisy cities and towns
The warm breeze softly caresses the leaves and stems that you spell-bind

I lay down amongst the dried grasses, and see a drifting butterfly
Studying the beauty, the symmetric strikingly-designed patterns, of such an exquisite thing
Whilst birds busy with their broods, and with the season's joy of life, boldly and gloriously sing
I smell the rich fragrance of summer, and wonder, as I gaze at the hazy white-on-deep-blue sky

Matters of my heart will be remembered, wrapped here in nature's gown
Her graceful body mysteriously moves and soothes, as if to caress me, her newfound lover
Here where the lust for life is ripe, and profoundly right, I suckle deeply and satisfyingly from her
As if in a dream, and with an enlightenment seen, I open my eyes again to this paradise I've found

I take a final look back as I walk towards the lichen-covered, almost hidden, gate
To this simple place, at peace and far away from the perpetual race of man's infatuation
That strangely and curiously talks to me, and deeply-sates my desires and inner passions
I walk off, somehow knowing that my life has changed, and that I know the hour is getting late

I had you down for a twat

I had you down for a twat, but you're pretty alright you
You're not as thick as I thought, and not so dopey too
You can be so f'ing stupid, and it really gets on my nerves
But you did let me keep that fifty, true to your word

And you can irritate the hell out of me, going on and on
I thought you were a right annoying c*nt, but maybe I was wrong
Always yapping away to me about something, like you've been trying to get closer
But I guess I can let you off, living gratis on your sofa

Remember my last birthday when you got me that wrong cake?
So you had to get another one too, even though it was too late?
You can be so bloody thoughtless, you've got to admit to that
But despite all your faults , I did get you wrong - you're not so much of a twat.

A billion miles from Earth

I sat in my ship, the Earth a tiny jewel of a blue dot, one billion miles away.
A fast disappearing dot in a mass of other dots in the deep vastness of black.
As I touched the controls on the softly glowing screen, I knew there was no going back.
My sad eyes gazed out, transfixed by that scene - I truly wished there had been another way.

I felt a bitterness at leaving my fellow earthlings, because of the things so many had lacked!
I felt ashamed and dismayed at my peoples arrogance and ignorance.
With the obsessions, oppression, corruption, war and outright indifference.
Never stopping to think of a much bigger picture, and our races humbled insignificance.
But still distorting, manipulating, lying, crying, obfuscating and contorting - to seek deliverance.
I turned. Thankfully I had a new world ahead of me. I started the thrusters and set my ships course -
and I never looked back.

Letting go

'Let go of the past' has always sounded easy to say
By colder people just wanting us facing forwards
Impatient and inconvenienced by the daemons that haunt us
Their selfishness bothered by the things in their way

But I've finally realised there might a deeper wisdom :

Perhaps there's a metaphor about the river of time
And we cling dearly to our loved ones deep in the flow
We are scared because we desperately don't want to let go
To see them quickly fade as the river winds

Am I just fighting the reality that we all have to go?
And am I aghast that I might forget to remember
The date, the time, of their death in November?
That one day no one will care, because no one will know

Should we 'let go' simply because of this deep truth about life itself?