

Anthology of The Retired Bloke

Presented by

My poetic side 



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Cleaning

You know what
I find cleaning therapeutic
I don't like the thought of it
Quite the opposite
I do anything I can to get out of it
At the slightest chance that I might be needed
I suddenly find some garden to be weeded
Or go to the shops in the car
Or meet friends in a bar
But when I am cornered
Run out of excuses
And forced to pick up a wipe and spray
I find the art of cleaning
Getting all the cupboards gleaming
A little bit relaxing
Some may say I should do some more
And maybe I will
Maybe I'll become another cleaning bore!

Waiting For God

I am a man who's always on the go
I find relaxing simply too taxing
I can't stay in one place, sit still for long
The urge to do something is far too strong
I try to read a book but I will look up
My mind will wander and I will ponder
The things that I could be doing instead
Whilst other folk enjoy their lie in in bed.
I thought that as I grow older I would change
Re-arrange my life , cut out the need to binge
On doing stuff that stops me being bored
Give me a breather, pause be restored
Maybe I will look back on times like this
When I'm old and frail, can't even piss
And wish I could be always on the go
Instead of waiting for god with a stranger called Joe.

Disaster at Genoa

Another disaster
Another shock
News that rocked the world
A human disaster
Beyond compare
Not a natural phenomenon
Couldn't be anticipated
By anyone
By anyone who crossed
Crossed the bridge
And plummeted
Plummeted to their demise
This should not happen
In a modern society
Such needless loss of life
Such massive destruction
An angry reaction
From the authorities
But at this time
Not a time for recrimination
But a time for reflection
For those who lost their life
On the bridge
That collapsed in Genoa.

When Life Slows Down

When life slows down to a standstill
When there's little left to fulfil
All that remains are inward reflections
Of a life lived, full of imperfections
Interspersed with the odd success
Which fills the heart with pride nonetheless

When life slows down to a standstill
When there's little left to fulfil
Make sure you've had big ambition
With dreams that created an ignition
A spark that set your world on fire
To achieve great things that you would now desire.

When life slows down to a standstill
When there's little left to fulfil
Look back on the past with pride
Feel the warmth of serenity inside
Be at peace, no regrets be contented
That you achieved all that you intended.

Mothers? Ruin

It used to be mothers' ruin
To drink a little drop of gin
Well today it's the done thing
Certainly a hit when our friend Lynn
Threw a party a success from the first min
Twenty types of tonic, fantastic, a real win
Plenty of music, including classics from Jeff Lynne
Pulsating rhythms got right under the skin
The laughter at the girls flossing, took it right on the chin
To express in words the fun we had I simply can't begin
So remember some may say it may be a sin
But there's nothing better than a whole lot of gin.

Pub Act

A pub act
It's a fact
That not all are good
In fact some should
Unplug the guitar
Forget Whisky in the Jar
Give their vocals
A breather, give the locals
A break from another bum note
That makes you want to cut your throat
But a good pub act
Engage and react
Give the punters a good time
They don't have to be sublime
Else they'd be on the big stage
But they need to listen, to gauge
The mood of their people
Create an energy almost primeval
A beer and great guitarist strumming
An on point vocal can get a place buzzing
So come on now give us a tune
How about the classic: Walking on the Moon.

Time to Diet

So today the diet begins
Time to reduce the double chins
No more raiding the biscuit tin
Time to resort to getting thin
Cutting back on the boozy beer
Time for my pounds to disappear
Fish and chips they'll be no more
Time to become a dieting bore
More intense running and training
Time to obsess about weight gaining
It wont be much fun to be around me
Watching me count every calorie.

Lost Sparkle

Storms on a sunny day
Flooding my emotions
With darkened skies
Clouds wanting to burst
To relieve uncontrollable pressure
The measure of which
I cannot easily convey
The weight of expectation
Pressing down on my burdened shoulders
It demands attention but I can only ignore
I turn away from the light
Towards the magnetic misery
Of a soulless existence.
Frightening in its solitude
Each single source of inspiration
Stamped out like an out of control firework
A fading glow a lost sparkle

My Story

My mum can remember
September 1952
As though it were yesterday
But struggle as she might
Can't recollect last night
Memories used to linger
But life is lived only in the now
As anything previous disappears somehow
It's sad when new pictures can't be stored
When each fresh experience is deleted.
No longer can we afford
To take our next day for granted
That is why I write a diary
So when I forget my life
There will remain my story.

At the next left...

She's there with me
Every step of the way
No guarantee
To get me there some day
She monitors my progress
She's more than a women
A favourite song by Tavares
Blurting out from my radio that's a given.
When all of a sudden
Without any notice
With touching no button
She aims to provoke us
By telling us our progress
That roadworks will delay us
She gives us an alternative
Which quite frankly
Is sometimes quite punitive
To try to get around the problem
It's not that I don't trust her
But that is the problem
It's the blind faith that I follow her
Down farmyard tracks
And through fields
Where doing a u turns simply leads
To further frustration
No option for a conversation
To work out the best solution
She obsessively commands
Direction after direction
Never flustered always the same tone
Droning and moaning to take the next left
When I am bereft

Of any knowledge of where we are
Witlessly driving in my car
Into the unknown
No signal on the phone
No others around to guide
And support me
Just her, my constant irritant
Who seems to be indifferent
To my feelings my angst
Of being ensconced
In my car with this woman
Help me escape from this trap
Surely someone, anyone
Can lend me a map!

The prefab

They were only supposed to be temporary
After the war a structure to house the homeless
With an inside loo seen as rather contemporary
Some may say that they were soulless
But to me the Arcon on Arcon Drive
Was an oasis of fun when I was about five
I used to stay with Grandma and Grandpa
Play football on a field at the back not far
I would run in the garden round and round
Pretending I was a train making a whistling sound
I remember sitting at the table on a big wooden chair
Enjoying mince and mash, a dinner beyond compare
There was no central heating just a gas fire
To go to the freezing bedroom I had no desire
In summertime I would watch with wonder
As grandpa tended his tommies and the occasional runner
I loved the prefab the house for the masses
Even if they are viewed now through rose coloured glasses.

Cake

Tea cups clinking
Tea pots pouring
People chatting
Friends are laughing
A tea shop is the place to be
But it's not the tea it's the cake for me
It doesn't matter whether it's a
Brownie
Banoffee
Coffee
Or Dundee
Maybe even a
Strawberry
Panettone sometimes
A fondant fancy
My mouth waters at the thought of a
Babka
Babousa
Banana
Genoa
Jaffa
Madeira
Opera
And Pavlova
Sometimes I fancy an
Apple
Angel
Marble
And fat rascal
Other times I'm drawn to a
Carrot
Chocolate
Coconut

And Charlotte

Nothing else matters for just one moment

When cake alone's the most important component.

Deadline

The deadline is getting nearer
Speeding faster than a bullet
The heart beats a little faster
The throat a little dryer
With every second that passes
The task grows in intensity
Living a life of its own
Throwing up challenges
Highlighting imbalances
Of what can and can't be achieved.
Droplets on the forehead
Putting off going to bed
Writing paragraph after paragraph
Need to cut out words instead.
At last the triumphant moment
With every single component
Placed accurately in line
The project is finally completed
Phew! Just made the deadline.

Counting Sheep

I haven't slept a wink last night
I tossed and turned but despite
Every effort to effect deep slumber
I couldn't find the magic number
Of sheep to count while dozing off
On one occasion I started to cough
Which woke me from potential torpor
Out came my feet a tactic in order
To cool my body on a hot summer's night
Perpetual movement made my wife uptight
Who too was now wide awake and grumpy
Complained that she couldn't now get comfy
The problem deteriorated it was now twofold
Covers flying off the bed totally uncontrolled
Tempers frayed it's all your fault
Out came flaying arms another assault
No concrete solutions could be found
I stared at the ceiling I stared at the ground
Morning took an eternity to arrive
A glimmer of light could be seen at five
The orange glow of sunrise showed
Through the crack in the curtains it glowed
Signalling time to end this misery
Arise and expect to be somewhat jittery
Tired and confused I started my day
With a hope in my heart that all's ok
That we can both survive on little sleep
Until tonight when we can count more sheep.

Cyber

War exists which we cannot see
But can touch everyone, all those who are free
Not a bomb is dropped
Or a gun fired or army deployed
We cannot physically see the enemy
The impact can touch every life
Can impinge on citizens liberties
Cut through barriers like a sharp knife
The aggressors, not military trained
Not taught to understand the intricacies of battle
Yet their trigger is the the return key
Chaos and suffering is ultimately their guarantee
Cyber attacks are modern day warfare
Affecting millions around the world
The impact of their actions laid bare
Yet the instigators are cosseted
Protected by a veil of secrecy
Hidden from the outside world
Who would have thought, in todays society, the sword
Would eventually be replaced by the qwerty keyboard.

Photography

Light up your life open the aperture
Focus in on what really matters
Zoom in on everything important
Delete what doesn't matter
Capture all your great experiences
Expose yourself every day to something new
See stunning places in high resolution
Appreciate reality no airbrushing
Always be positive resist being negative
Take time to support and develop others
Let inspiration come to you in a flash
See the big picture not just a snapshot
Include others rely less on the selfies
This is your time your biography
Enjoy life embrace photography.

She once said....

She once said
It's a glad to be alive day
I know what she meant
Today with blue skies
Warm air and gentle breeze
Birds joyfully twittering in the trees
Beckoning the world to arise
To see the wonder of a bright new day
All this to the musical score
Of the leaves softly rustling
An owl hooting along to the melody
Of this natural remedy
To life's stresses and strains
I know what she meant
When she tried to convey
The euphoria of it being
A glad to be alive day.

Pedro

Now Pedro isn't an ugly lad
My wife and other ladies drooling
Is more than testimony to that
He's got a great sense of humour especially when he's fooling

And frightening folk with the length of the walk
Or saying it will be an age to dinner
Extolling the virtues of Porto in every talk
His incessant Dad jokes always a winner.

To prevent the gang from frazzling
On a trip down 700 steps from a sanctuary
Whilst in his one armed Ray Bans dazzling
Fresh clothing is always a necessity

On nights out Pedro has to look smart
For him it's clearly no fiesta
When to set him apart
They make him wear a cheap suit made of polyester.

Pedro revelled at the opportunity
After a couple of choice wines and a port
For the chance to deliver the itinerary
For our following day afloat

Now the cooking demonstration intrigued me
When he said the last chefs name was pissed off
Something got lost in translation you see
As I think his name was actually Christoph

On the bus home it was quite interesting
When he started to sing to be fair
A song sung in falsetto quite amusing

From his favourite idol Carmen Miranda

Now I don't know whether he was serious
When he invited us all to his hostel in Porto
But I knew my Mrs felt quite delirious
At the thought of seeing our leader Pedro.

So without further ado I'd like to thank the lad
For making the tour so much fun
For I am truly grateful and glad
For all the Douro facts that he's given us in the sun.

Promenade

So here we are in tranquil Hornsea
On our regular walk with Dylan and Alfie
A beautiful morning to stroll by the sea
Sun shining some lovely photography
The promenade is so peaceful
Silence broke with a friendly good morning
From good natured hospitable people
My early coffee at the caf transforming
Take in the coastal panorama
Wave after wave crashing on the beach
Take it easy laid back no drama
Paradise found easily within reach
The best things in life they say are free
I've got to admit I have to agree
Nothing much beats an early walk on the promenade at Hornsea.

Running

There was a runner from Bradley
Who thought of me as a coach quite badly
But after doing her couch to 5k
She now thinks running's
ok
And tries every run to surpass me.

ADHD

I think I suffer from ADHD
As my mind wanders about you see
I try to live my life in the moment
But rapid thoughts in my head prevent
A simple line of sight to see to concentrate
On anything for long. I know this doesn't exonerate
Me from any blame for poor judgement
Or for not finishing tasks or being reluctant
To take responsibility for my actions
Or my occasional unexpected reactions
There are some benefits that I can see
Making quick decisions based on what I foresee
ADHD though can be so tiring
The brain always engaged perpetually firing
I would like now and again to have a blank mind
To relax and to discover inner peace and find
The reason for my tiring resistance
The purpose of my chaotic existence

Blank Walls

Blank walls
No windows
Absence of light
To enlighten you
To inspire you
Essential thoughts
Critical solutions
Finding the source
Of Life's great challenges
Look closer
Try harder
Search for
A glimmer of light
To inspire you
To overcome
What seemed
Irrepressible
Impossible
Distinctly unachievable
Grasp the light
Hold on tight
Think straight
Keep it simple
Hold onto that symbol
That guides you
Towards the ultimate
Path of fulfilment

Being Thin

Sometimes I'm fat sometimes thin
Occasionally I have a double chin
There's no big secret to losing weight
You can't adjust your adult height
To spread the load of excess timber
Or wish yourself a little slimmer
It's all about food and exercise
Nothing intelligent nothing wise
Just resist the urge for another biscuit
A little walk, jog or swim is almost implicit
Avoid the need to binge on telly soaps
Or reality shows with blokes being blokes
Live your life not watch others live theirs
Avoid the lift always take the stairs
See the sofa as your ultimate enemy
Regular activity will help you mentally
At the end of the day life is about choices
Being sedentary will inevitable destroy us
So get off your backside lose that double chin
Before you know it you will be thin!

Through these eyes...

Through these eyes nothing has changed
No passing of time, my youth has remained
All around me loved ones are maturing
Wrinkles emerge, wiseness reassuring
But in my mind I still feel like a child
Wanting to be reckless, wonderful and wild
Occasionally I glance towards my hands
Whose skin fits looser and demands
My attention to see the truth of the matter
That I too are growing old, something to shatter
The illusion that only a mirror can reflect
Fully the ageing process and every defect
Some say you are the age that you feel
To me this has a great deal of appeal
So today my heart still feels full of life
Forever too young to give up the fight.

Parkrun

It happens every Saturday
A rag bag collective of runners
On a non work day quite early
All walks of life from lawyers to plumbers
Gather to do their weekly 5K
Now I'm not judging, don't get me wrong
The bodies on display all shapes and sizes
Some chubby and short some lean and long
A pooch taking its owner for a spin
A mother clinging onto pram and baby
Waiting patiently at the start line to begin
There's the obligatory announcements
With cheers for visitors and first timers
Three, two, one and all the contestants
The good the bad and the beginners
Are off on their circuitous journey
There's the sprinters who rapidly set off
Their bravado doesn't deter me
Overtaking them later, I'll try not to scoff
Then there's the kids who have no right
Their little legs rapidly running
At the third lap to be out of sight
A great achievement quite stunning
Then there's the mothers meeting
Three portly women walking side by side
No deodorant needed, certainly not sweating
But get in my way that I can't abide
After much huffing and puffing
Some overtaking, the final straight is in sight
I'm feeling quite good, with very little suffering
A final flourish and my time is alright.

Bowel Scope Screening

Today that dreaded moment arrived
And thankfully I lived, I just about survived
My bowels were the focus of the attention
A camera up my bum did I fail to mention

The purpose of the procedure, big C screening
Which required an enema to do the cleaning
Can't believe that folk enjoy this as a treat
Pay for the experience, make their life complete

Nothing glamorous at home poking
A tube up the bum with my wife hoping
That her involvement would be kept to a minimum
Wasn't keen to insert it further up my bum

A little squirt and all was done, just needed a little fermenting
Time stood still until it was time to spend time sitting
On the bog until the concoction did its trick
The end result like a waterfall, all over quite quick

Next step was, hold on tight, and off the the hospital
Hoping and praying that I wouldn't lose my bottle
In the waiting room I sat down nervously
Seemed a long time sweating profusely

Soon it was my turn, silently walking to my fate
To be told by a nurse the procedure may hurt
I bravely said I needed no gas and air
I was vividly aware that my bum would be bare

I was ushered into the room full of women
To fully inspect my anus was their mission
Then finally with a flourish a thumb inserted

With one insertion all modesty deserted

And finally the piece de resistance
A big butch woman needed no assistance
To push what seemed like a telescope
Up my back passage with the hope

Of checking everything was alright
At the time things seemed rather tight
To help things along they blew air up my bum
To make me feel like I had a balloon like tum

Thankfully no sign of Big C clearly detailed on the chart
I've got to admit that I didn't really have the heart
To tell all those watching that in the end all I needed
Was to let loose and emit an almighty big fart!

The Breakfast Buffet

Now I don't class myself as a greedy person
However when faced with a breakfast buffet feast
It doesn't need any persuasion any coercion
To turn into a five course hungry beast

What is it when confronted with the temptation
At home I'd just have a bowl of porridge
But on holiday I'm tempted to eat a small nation
To be honest I'm not sure where I find the storage

I often eat two big chocolate muffins
A bowl of Kellogg's cornflakes
Never mind the repercussions
Some bread and cheese some creamy cakes

Some fruit to make me feel healthy
A couple of donuts woofed down
In the corner hidden from prying eyes quite stealthy
In coffee, tea and orange juice I drown

When the sun comes up at the beginning of the day
And confronted with the breakfast banquet
I need self control and find a way
To say thank you very much and politely decline it.

Puncture

It's no fun when you get a puncture on your bike
It's a bloody inconvenience of which I don't like
Hissing away laughing in your face
The bloody bike, it's a terrible disgrace

It doesn't make it easy with its tricky derailleur
My frustrating failure very poor behaviour
By the time the wheel's off I'm up to the eye balls
In black oily muck, when a passer by calls

"Do you need a hand" "No Thanks" I replied
Pride before a fall, I was dying inside
The tyre decided it didn't want to depart
From the wheel, so I couldn't even start

To repair the stubborn thing at first
But some elbow grease and I gave it my best
And all of a sudden the tyre gave way...passed my test
Out came the inner tube all limp and apologetic
Getting annoyed with this seemed rather pathetic

Soon the new one was eased into place
Ready to be pumped my saving grace
With some more clever dexterity the wheel was back on, reinflated
The battle won against the bike felt totally elated.

The Handbag

There's one place left on earth
Where no one living has dared to go
Where deep in the recesses anything can linger
Where black holes look on jealously
There seems no order to what lies beneath
And although open is very much a shut case
Where prying fingers face corporate punishment
And the thought of a foreign body being inserted
Brings instant derision and has to be averted
At any cost if you value your life
Yes there's no stranger place than the bottom of the handbag
That protectively belongs to my darling wife.

Steve Jobs? Dying Words

Yesterday I read Steve Jobs dying words
And for me they struck a note so clear
That they made a lot of life's practices absurd
When mortality is near when all that we fear

Is just around the corner, when the end
Becomes a certainty, an inevitability
When it is impossible to go back to mend
The mistakes we've made, the futility

Of focusing on amassing material wealth
Striving to have the biggest and the best
When paramount is looking after your health
The love for your family and friends expressed

Daily in all that we try to do and all that we say
How we give's more significant than how we take
For those lucky enough we can make the change today
To choose wisely in all the decisions we make

Buckingham Palace

I've watched this place from afar
But standing there was bizarre
An almost surreal experience
Once secretive, quite mysterious

But now I was standing there
With fellow citizens to share
The magnificence of Nash's splendour
Breathing in the history, a surrender

To the pomp and ceremony
Which stand firm a testimony
To our country's Royal lineage
Paraded on such a glorious stage

Rembrandts Canalettos and Rubens
Previous monarchs immense contributions
To the Royal collection there on show
Priceless pieces of art to bestow

But this is not a stuffy museum
A rotting place, a mausoleum
But the beating heart of our nation
Embracing the traditions of this generation

And every generation beforehand
Some may not agree I understand
The value gained from the royal family
But here on that day the real fantasy

Lived out by all those present, wide eyed
Could not help to have a warm feeling inside
Oh how I wanted to dream and reminisce

That day in the State Room of Buckingham Palace.

Carefree Summers

This summer reminds me of summers past
When endless glorious days seem to last
I remember lazy days, the ice cream man
The excitement when we could hear his van
Playing tinny tunes to attract the hoard
Of children who'd buy what their parents could afford
I loved a 99 topped with sprinkles and syrup
There were no worries that we wouldn't burn up
The calories as we didn't know when to stop
Playing energetically outside until we'd drop
I used to have a neighbour, a friend called Mark
We used to play tennis until it was dark
We dreamed of playing at Wimbledon
Competitive maybe but lots of fun
Somehow in those days we were not afraid
Of the sun in whose heat we endlessly played
Those days were carefree, happy and simple
Long summer days in my home town Hull.

Growing Old

I am fearful of growing old
So old that I can no longer live
No longer independent, controlled
In a vegetative state where I outlive
All my friends, my wife, my generation
Unable to run, walk or even crawl
A parasite on the tax paying population
Where each day I fear of an inevitable fall
Where no one cares whether I live or die
Just a burden to everyone around me
All I can do is stare aimlessly into the sky
Try to remember when I was wonderfully free
When I had all of my life in front of me
When joy came from laughter and fun
The touch of my beautiful wife Lesley
When there were so many dreams to be done
I am fearful of growing old
I guess this is a good thing
So choices made now can be so bold
Allow me to be positive to everything
Embrace life live it to the max
Enjoy every moment every breath I take
Don't be afraid of heart attacks
Soak in every second make the odd mistake
I guess I should be ultimately grateful
That I have lived a long enough life
To be fearful of actually growing old.

LED Street Lamp Rant

They've changed the lamps in our street
There used to be an orange glow
Which lit up the path where you wanted to go
But now there are direct white beams
Of LED light, a good idea at first it may seem
Saving the planet, now that must be a good thing
But these create sinister patterns, rather frightening
As you walk along the paths alone at night
Who know whose lurking in the shadow that might
Jump out and cause you grievous harm
I don't want to create unnecessary alarm
But please give us back our light
So we can safely see at night.

Stop Chewing Dear....

Take out your chewing gum dear
I thought it'd be perfectly clear
That to chew when serving coffee or tea
So rigorously that we could easily see
The bit of gum going round and round
Surely this bit of advice is not so profound
It's simply manners and customer service
To pay us the respect, simply stop chewing
So that I can stop thinking about pursuing
Another place to go
To drink my macchiato.

Build Up

Expectation builds before the game
A win is needed for the title to claim
The team talk is tense and emotional
Some words uttered not quotable
Passion builds to a stupendous crescendo
Leave nothing out to avoid innuendo
High fives as the players leave to play
Hoping that form finds us here today
The players one by one rush onto the field
Over the next 90 minutes fate will be sealed.
The captains meet at the middle and shake hands
The ref lays down the rules and commands
Players nervous hearts start to pound
As the final seconds slowly count down
The ref carefully takes his whistle in his hand
A cacophony of sound emanates from the stand
With one clear blow of the whistle done
At last this momentous match has begun.

Couch to 5k

"It's no good" she said
I will have to lose some weight
As she struggled to get out of bed
"I want to have abs toned and tight"

There'll have to be a stop to slobbering
Doing nothing much just eating
Why don't you take up jogging
She thought I must be joking

I've heard of couch to 5k
A programme to help people like you
She looked at me laughed and said no way
I've never been a jogger, it's something I simply don't do

Time went on she tried to resist
But I kept on nagging
Really tried to persist
Pointed out the sagging

Several slaps later
She gave in relented
And laced up her trainer
To a test run she consented

The first stage, a gentle walk
To get all loose and warmed up
Out of breath no need to talk
The moaning started I said wassup?

I can't do it it's just too much effort
You haven't started jogging yet
Bugger off my legs are starting to hurt

Come on love let's build up a sweat

I said trying to be motivational coach
If looks could kill I wouldn't be writing this
I think on reflection was the wrong approach
If she had the strength a Glasgow kiss

Would be placed right on my bonce
Through gritted teeth she said let's do it
A two minute jog started all at once
Although struggling she would not quit

She kept on going with the style of a baby elephant
Pounding the streets all ponderous and slow
An interesting style hunched up, very inelegant
At the one minute marker she hit her plateau

I think I've hit my peak
I looked at her with dismay
I don't think that I can speak
Thank goodness for that hip hip hooray

Joking apart we got through the first session
Of walking and jogging full of lively conversation
A thirty minute workout full of angst and tension
A true test of our marriage a proper examination

The battle of the bulge

My life has been one big battle
A battle against the bulge
Weight up and down since antenatal
Always wanting to over indulge

On savoury and sweet things
On crisps, cakes and all Greggs bakes
On fish and chips and chicken wings
On Indian curries and strawberry shakes

Never a healthy salad in sight
No nuts and seeds and stuff like weeds
No I like fried stuff all dripping with fat
Fulfilling my unhealthy comfort needs

So to compensate I have to run
And run and run and run and run
Some days it's horrible certainly no fun
But with all this crap I'm eating it's got to be done

I keep saying to myself one day
You won't be able to burn off all those cakes
And people will look and say
If only less ice cream cones with flakes

Then as I wobble around the house
Not being able to do much
But to watch tv and lay on the couch
With food being my only crutch

I think to myself I'll have to make the change
To reform from eating oh so unhealthy
Make the change and forever exchange

The salad for the sweet and savoury

Just Lying

Life begins
Just lying
Occasionally crying
Then crawling
Sometimes bawling
First stepping
Confident walking
Hesitant running
Start cycling
Stabiliser removing
Wobbly riding
Long biking
School sports competing
Exams taking
Some even passing
University starting
Degree completing
A bit of travelling
Work commencing
Serious dating
Mr and Miss right engaging
A fairy tale wedding
Kids conceiving
Gender revealing
Baby showering
Painful birthing
Lovely christening
First birthday celebrating
Watch them growing
School starting
School leaving
University starting
University leaving

Kids marrying
Grand children birthing
Family outing
Start hiking
Think about retiring
Finish working
Increase holidaying
A bit of gardening
Back starts hurting
Hips need replacing
Increase use of zimmer framing
Legs stop walking
Need supporting
No longer stepping
Memory fading
Feel like bawling
Struggling crawling
Just lying
Then dying.

Fear of self assembly

I have a fear
Of putting together
Anything bought from Ikea
Surely the instructions
Should be named destructions
I never know where to start
The drawings look like modern art
Even the thought of engaging
Gets my blood pressure raising
Screws and bolts too many to count
Some I am sure you can do without
There's always an allen key included
The need for which is not disputed
But after thirty lots of screwing
And of several needing undoing
Having instructions upside down
Feeling foolish like a clown
If there's two ways of putting together
I will certainly lose my tether
When realising I've chosen the wrong option
Suffering from a lack of concentration
Occasionally I have to let off a scream
When these puzzles are far too extreme
I can't seem to get my head around it
Bloody hell how can I be such an idiot
Whatever gave me the stupid idea
I could put something together from Ikea

Be Thankful

He was sometimes so high
So high he felt he could fly
Fly in the clouds high in the sky
Like a bird untethered and free
Sometime he came crashing down
Crashing uncontrollably crashing down to earth
Faster than a peregrine falcon
Targeting its innocent prey
There were no signs, no signals
Of which way he would go
There were no indications
Which way the river would flow
There was no way of telling
Whether the tide was approaching
Or fading away in to the distance
Just one second it would take
To reconfigure the mood
To end the joy and replace with sadness
No matter how hard he tried
He couldn't combat the trigger
He could not figure
How to suppress the feelings
Of continuous extremes
Ebbing and flowing backwards and forwards
In the dead of night populating dreams
Stoking nightmares and fantasies
Of long life and sudden death
Breathing fresh air then struggling for breath
Oh how he wished for a life
Where everything was measured
Where every second welcomed and treasured
Where the road ran smooth
No potholes to navigate

Where all around sooth
But life is too precious to be who we're not
And just be thankful for all that we've got.

Lose That Frown

My aim in life is to be more mellow
Not angry at the smallest thing
But be a chilled out laid back fellow
Someone to make life go with a swing

Not angry at the latest bill
Not miffed when cut up in traffic
No need to take a pill to chill
Treat all the same, every demographic

Not angry at the cost of tea
Or speed bumps in the road
Or paying a fortune for a pee
Or getting money back I'm owed

Not angry when I'm late for a date
Not troubled when cars break down
Or when I'm feeling overweight
I'm trying to smile and lose that frown

Unaccustomed

He knew he had prepared
The worn out carpet
Was evidence enough
Rehearsing the words
Wanting his voice to be heard
Not planning for slip ups
He went over it
Time and time again
Sometimes feeling confident
Sometimes not
Sometimes he forgot
To breath, to stop
In the relevant places
To raise his voice
To intonate correctly
To not speak too quickly
To avoid feeling sickly
And then the moment
The nerve wracking moment
The terrifying moment
Arrived far too soon
Up he stepped
Gingerly onto the platform
Desperately trying
Not to trip
Nervously biting his bottom lip
Throat dry as sandpaper
Up to the lectern
He gazed towards the eyes
The hundreds of eyes
Staring expectantly
Waiting for the first utterance
Conscious that his legs

Have taken on a life
Of their own
Shaking in rhythm
To a mysterious beat
Silence surrounds him
Anticipation increases
The eyes now piercing
Commands action
Or some signal
That he was to begin
And then the immortal words
Uttered tentatively, cautiously almost automatically
Ladies and gentlemen
Unaccustomed as I am....

Ruin Pubs

Booze, beer and broken houses
An atmosphere altogether unique
Attracts night owls to their inner halls
Eccentric decor adorns the walls
Graffiti, uniquely, not out of place
In other lands, seen as a disgrace
Here the atmosphere is electric
Senses stimulated , quite eclectic
Music, magic, mayhem and madness
Pulsating beats with a little brashness
Art, entertainment fully expressed
Down in the ruin pubs of Budapest

Ups and Downs

There are ups
There are downs
There are times when all around
Seem to conspire against you
There are others when there's nothing but deep joy
To envelop you
Life is punctuated with highs and lows
Of times of overwhelming sense of achievement
Of periods of low self esteem and feeling of failure
When no one can console or cheer you
But that's what its all about
To not witness the lows
Not experience bitter disappointment
Does not prepare the mind
Differentiate life's journey
Fill the soul with the full bandwidth of insights
To prepare for the pleasure
When the sun touches skin
When family is there to greet you
When loved ones wrap their arms around you
When a stranger takes time to include you in their world
When simple plans work to perfection
There are ups
There are downs
Just grasp every moment
Every high point every low
Learn from those experiences
To help you mature, help you grow.

Waiting

Sat on a plane
Going quietly insane
Waiting for take off
For traffic control
To allow us
To take to the air
To wind our way home
Belted in can't move
Air conditioning
Struggling to freshen
The stifling heat
The suffocating stuffiness
Feeling tetchy
Irritable and growing irate
Our journey home's
Going to be intolerably late
I rifle through the magazine
Full of so called brilliant offers
For watches and perfume
But there's only so many
Times I can manage
To get excited by some
New fangled gadget
I even read the safety on board card
From top to bottom
Both front and back
Checked the sick bag
All present and empty
At last the engines
Roar into action
Still sat on a plane
But now going home.

Shoes

Close to the edge
They face the water
Signifying the slaughter
Of Jews in the 1940s
Innocent men, women and children
Their last act
To take off their shoes
To take a bullet
And fall unceremoniously
Into the Danube
Metal shoes
In all shapes and sizes
Mark the spot
Of this heinous crime
Against humanity
Against all with compassion
In their heart
Lest we forget
The massacre
Of the innocents
In Budapest.

What Stops Us

What stops us

Freezes ambition

Prevents new experiences

Limits growth

Halts progress

Restricts new relationships

Undermines ones potential

Fear,

Fear of reality

Fear of perceived reality

Fear of being fearful

Fear of failure.

Fear.

Not Keen on Decorating

I'm not that keen on decorating
I don't have the inclination
Even though our rooms are degenerating
Cos I'm lacking in motivation

To do anything about it
Until my wife has a quiet word
To encourage me to commit
Resistance now being quite absurd

So out I traipse to the shed
Drag out old brushes and rollers
Find the old bed spread
That I use for furniture covers

Bedroom emptied onto the landing
Take one deep breath and begin
The miserable task of sanding
Paper so rough it hurts my skin

Once the dusty mess is made
A bucket full of sugar soap solution
Washing walls, cleaning skills displayed
Probably more like dirt re-distribution

Finally we're ready for the paint job
Even opening the tin is a nightmare
Several attempts later, starting to sob
Tin lid finally free, was starting to despair.

So now armed with roller and paint
I attack the ceiling, walls and skirting
With renewed vigour no restraint

My increased enjoyment a little disconcerting

In no time at all the decorating job is done

Quite painless not too bad after all

I have got to admit I almost had fun

So much so I might have to do the hall.

Trouble Reading

They say you can't put a good book down
Well I have the opposite problem
I can't keep it up!
You see I have the attention span of a fly
Doesn't matter how hard I try
My mind wanders as I ponder
Something quite irrelevant
Not about the story but about
Getting the car serviced
Cutting the grass
What's for tea?
Is it only me who struggles to concentrate?
I read a page, turn to the next
Only remember the last paragraph at best
This month I've started four books
Got to about to chapter three
Not very far I'm sure you'll agree
But then I lose interest
Move onto another
I'm sure will be better
But each time I fail
To sit long enough
To take in and understand the detail
Maybe I should get back to Janet and John
At least they wouldn't take me long
To read them from cover to cover
Before I move onto another.

Life is like a mobile phone

A mobile phone is like a human
To fully operate needs a charge
Like a phone, no woman, no man
Can fully engage, live it large

Each day injections of electricity
Transform the function of the machine
The basics of life the simplicity
Of food, water, love shelter are seen

To provide energy for life's applications
That perform essential tasks and stimuli
For comfortable living in the modern age.
The camera phone operates like the eye

A vision taken, saved and stored in the cloud
Like the brain once seen hard to delete
Some images disgust some make us proud
Like our phones eventually we are obsolete

No longer the height of fashion and appeal
Too old to function with deteriorating battery
Hidden away despite still being able to deal
With most things in life, even if a little jittery

Sometimes I feel like a Nokia Five Double One Zero
I used to be the cool one, the one everyone craved
At the time I lasted forever, an everyday hero
Now I'm history, no function, decrepit, deprived.

Nothing's what it seems

There's a smile on your face
Hiding the pain
Lurking underneath
Nothing's quite what it seems
On scraping the surface.

The Fall

The golden season emerges stealthily
Without warning and growing intensity
Branches previously clothed in suits of green
Now in flamboyant reds and oranges they preen
This beauty is a treasure, a technicolour screen
Waves of gilded confetti flutter in the air
A finale of magic and movement beyond compare
A simply stunning swan song, nature calling
For all to witness the summer's curtain call
With branches bare from the last leaf descending
Taking their bow at the end of the fall

My First Car

I remember my very first car
A Hillman Avenger painted in maroon
It was my pride and joy
My most important possession by far

But back in those days
Cars were not what they are today
Crossing fingers when turning the ignition
So unique in so many ways

Paintwork so vulnerable to rust
Accelerated when exposed to rain
Hard certainly to explain
Why parts of the vehicle turned to dust.

To distract from the growing decay
I adorned the car with fluffy trinkets
Collected from the occasional breakdown free trips
Playing music on AM radio the only way

To drown the drone of the puny petrol engine
Which gave up hope at the merest chance of moisture
Leaving us stranded and abandoned
Too many incidents to mention.

But back in those days cars were part of the family
Unconditional love bestowed upon them daily
Forgiving all faults and frailties
Up and down with the bonnet happily

Tinkering with spark plugs, points and under seal
Forever filling with oil and sorting the tracking
It really hard to see the appeal

But I loved my Hillman Avenger
It was not simply a modern appliance
Starting with boring regularity
Until that day I finally did surrender

And bought a Mini Metro!

Adventure Before Dementia

One day I may forget who I am
Unable to distinguish light and shade
Loved ones will gather round as strangers to me
Telling stories of adventures I've experienced
But which feel like fiction from a romantic novel
I will no longer be able to savour new memories
Instantly erased as soon as they are created
So grasp I will all that life has to offer
Fill the senses with new insights
Forever in the moment register every second
Savour each and every adventure
Before the potential onset of dementia

Couch Potato

My wife used to be a couch potato
The only exercise she got was to do her nails
Or to miserably climb on and off the scales
And occasionally eat an avocado

There were times when she would hoop
Or engage in a bit of Zumba
A little dance a little rumba
Hiding away in a little group

Never ever did she get up a sweat
Or raise the heartbeat above resting
Nothing ever was really too testing
Her calorie intake never under threat

Then she found she would try running
Using a little app on her phone
So she didn't feel all alone
Her motivation, to look stunning

When she looked in the mirror
To be pleased what she saw
To stop being a dieting bore
To simply feel a little thinner

Well yesterday she did a 10k
In a time of 1 hour and 12 minutes
So good there are simply no limits
To what she can eat at the Chinese buffet.

Music

When you're feeling down
Needing a lift, a boost
When all around seems grey
Full of doom and despair
Music inspires and heals
The ills of your life, the strife
Creates waves of positivity
Raises spirits from low to high
Every beat, striking the right note
From moody clouds to blue sky
Murky water to glistening pools
Rhythms in time to every heartbeat
Transforming seamlessly new emotions
From hostility to ecstasy
Pessimism to optimism
Music moves the very core
The soul, life's spirit
Punctuating every breath with love, hope and happiness.

Fallen Idol

They flocked to see the once great man
Standing alone at the mike on the stage
The years they had not been kind
Hunched up struggling before he began

Once soul and clarity were his trade mark
Today there was a certain emptiness
A lost soul plying his trade the best he could
But lacking conviction no credible spark

The music so loud drowned his voice
The ravages of abuse for all to see
A hanky needed to wipe the brow
A life impacted by a faulty life choice

The crowd were generous in their applause
Singing as best they could to vintage hits
Supporting their once golden idol
Feeling in their hearts he was a lost cause!

Saturday Night (Not at the movies)

Saturday night watching TV
A little bit of X Factor and Strictly
Wine in one hand remote in the other
The bottle placed handy for another

It feels a lot like a guilty pleasure
Very chilled out simply no pressure
Nothing here to tax the mind
No big step forward for human kind

It's simply nice to relax and unwind
Watch Simon Cowell try to find
The next superstar the next big thing
Asking what song they would like to sing

Then there's Bouncy Bruno waving his arms
Spreading compliments about dancers charms
Feedback sometimes gets pros a little furious
Not when Revel Horwood says they are gorgeous

At the end of the night a little worse for wear
I struggle eventually to get out of the chair
And slowly stagger up the stairs to bed
Thinking of what I could have done instead!

Inspirational Drought

Today I'm feeling fraught.
Reeking in self doubt.
Challenging every thought.
An inspirational drought.

No time to think or cry.
Words, eliminated, erased
Before the ink is dry.
Quiet confidence replaced

With a hollow emptiness
To express this pent up feeling
Of lost hope. A shallowness
Of sentiment that's concealing

Those lost syllables of insight.
The dismal darkness descends
As I desperately seek for the light,
Of returning creativity to transcend.

Seville Stunner

This was a famous night in Seville.
An England team demonstrating the skill
To tear a talented Spain apart
A performance gutsy and full of heart.

Sterling a player previously misfiring
Scored two goals, was awesome, inspiring
Rashford cant get a game with United
Seeing him score I was totally elated.

3-0 at half time, England in dreamland
A game to compare to the 1-5 v Deutschland.
The second half backs against the wall
England struggling to even get the ball

A headed goal, Spain pulled one back
Only one team on the attack
A goal at the death made it a 3-2 victory
Up there with the best in football history.

One Toe at a Time

One toe at a time
Gingerly entering the water
Shivers running down my spine
As I enter the pool at sunrise
Bravely I go in deeper
Deeper into the blue glistening water
Looking so inviting
But biting back with every step
Holding my breath I take the plunge
Submerge into the abyss
A refreshing start to the morning is this!

Me

I am
Or am I?
I live
Or do I?
I try
But really?
I see
Very clearly?
I hear
But listen?
I give
Completely?
I take
Too regularly?
I err
Too frequently?
I love
Overtly?
I cry
Sufficiently?
I learn
Too occasionally?
I forget
Habitually?
I am
Without question!
Me!

Ancient Thera

This was a walk to history
A little mystery
A little adventure
As we took tentative steps
Towards a life alien
Yet so familiar
Each step closer
To a previous civilisation
As we climbed higher
The world below
Turned microscopic
As we approached
Something historic
Perched precariously
On a mountain top
Ancient Thera
Welcomed us to
A world where imagination
Takes us to another place
Where genius from a previous age
Invented, created civilisation
To remind us that we are transient
A speck on the history of this world.

When I Retired

When I retired

I didn't retire from life

Didn't want to be a spectator

Standing on the sidelines

Watching the clock ticking down

When I retired

I wanted to be a participant

Have dreams and ambitions

Play a full part, know in my heart

There's nothing more left to give

When I retired

I wanted to be a better team player

A giver rather than a taker

Supporting family, my loved ones

Achieve their goals and ambitions

When I retired

This was just half time

The end of a frantic first period

This was a new start

Not the end

Trying To Be Thin

For my height
I'm a bit overweight
It's certainly no fun
When it gathers round my tum
And shirts feel tight
Quite a sight
As buttons pop
Over my belt it does flop
I try to diet
Do it mainly in private
So as not to create a reaction
The unwanted attraction
Of people tutting
The thought of them judging
Me eating some fish and chips
Which immediately hits my hips
I try a bit of running
I think this is quite cunning
As I feel I can have another pudding
But who am I kidding
I need to watch every calorie
Eat tomato and a bit of celery
Resist the biscuit tin
Think my self thin thin thin
Try to get back to the person I've been
The person whose hiding within!

I Feel Like Stretch Armstrong

I feel like Stretch Armstrong
A bit of yoga it didn't take long
To get into positions not natural
Seemed at first very irrational

To do a downward facing dog
Breathing easy to clear the fog
Things got tough I became a warrior
Aching limbs I became even sorrier

Struggling to balance on my mat
Thinking where to place my fat
That I'd even bothered to turn up at all
She said it'd be good I would have a ball

Another stretch this time a locust
Praying to god this torture must
End and be able to stand up normally
Oh no another movement of deformity

Relax she said as I balanced on a brick
Hoping that it'd be over pretty quick
Our next move was against a wall
Keeping us up to prevent a fall

I've got to admit it was better than expected
Not a sport I would have voluntarily selected
It set me up for a pretty good day
Well until the next time namaste.

Big Black Boots

Big black boots
Black frock coats
Frightening looking folks
White faces painted
Not for the faint hearted
At the alter of Bram Stoker
Skulking in a dim dark corner
Vampires for the day
Victoriana at play
Sinister yet serene
A nod to what has been
Transformed into Goth City
The seaside resort of Whitby.

I?ve Always Been a Beer Drinker

I've always been a beer drinker
Didn't care too much for spirits
But when I did it had to be
A simple glass of G&T

The other day I was in a bar
Thinking of what to drink
Fancied something different
But here was my predicament

When I said I think I'll have a G&T
They looked at me confused
We have 50 sorts of gin for you
Here take a look at our menu.

There was so much to choose from
A brand from every town and city
And what is this fuss about tonic botanical
The choice in the past was full fat or low cal

So many combinations to choose from
Plus the dilemma of what fruit to add
Standing there scratching my head
I decided to have a beer instead.

When Plastic was Fantastic

When plastic was fantastic
It was all the rage
Thought it was the future
A material here to stay
We loved the fact that straws could bend
Could be made clear, coloured and curly
Fish and chips in newspapers
Replaced by takeaways in trays
Drinks in plastic bottles
So easy to discard
Glass bottled milk
No longer clink clink
Gone forever almost extinct.
We thought this was the future
We certainly didn't foresee
That all this crap
Would eventually
End up in the sea.

Precious

Life is precious
So fragile
A single moment
One solitary second
Is all it takes
To take away
A soul

Almost Heaven

Beautiful bright beach huts
Each one deliciously different
Standing like a guard of honour
To those basking in the Autumn glow.
Pines protect from prevailing winds
As Seaside strolls on shell speckled sand
A wonderful walk to Holkham Beach
Where heaven feels almost within reach.

Just The One

Let's just have the one
Rest our feet for a while
Savour that first sip
God that was so good
That first turns into a second
Soon our glasses are empty
Shall we have an other?

Yes just one more
Chatter is free warm
And comforting
Spirits high, banter good
Shall we have another?

Jokes are now filling the air
Much funnier than before
Knowing smiles with adjacent tables
Almost knee jerk automatic
Shall we have another?

Life is now so much more fluid
Innermost thoughts out in the open
Dissected by amateur psychiatrists
Slowly starting to feel a little pissed
We know we shouldn't
But show no restraint
Shall we have another?

Quickly the clarity
Fades like a mist descending
Retreating into my own little world
Which instantly starts spinning
Oh god what have we done

We were only meant to have the one!

Not Again!

The banging of my head
As I lay here in my bed
Signals it was a good night
However this is despite

Not really remembering
The finer details surrounding
What got me to this point
I'm hoping I didn't disappoint

My wife with my behaviour
Toast and tea my saviour
When I poured into the house
Failing to be as quiet as a mouse

This was a not again night
Where next time I might
Show a little more self control
To drink a lot less my goal.

Shivering Shadows

Shivering shadows in doorways
A daily strife not a life
Only seconds away
In bright glitzy hallways
Well healed entertain their wives
A stark reminder of a society
Where a chosen path, a road
May lead to an unwanted reality
Those unfortunate who find their world in a gutter
Need more than our pity
In the city of Spires
A city of learning
Oxford City.

Oxford

Spires steeples and bustling streets
Quiet corners where couples meet
Bikes with bells ringing
Choirs cheerfully singing
In cafe bars society chatters
Current affairs and everyday matters
Bow ties scarves and college colours
Students away from their sisters and brothers
This is a place of learning
For those educated, the quite discerning
This is a city of tradition
Of academia and ambition.
This is Oxford.

Broken Coffee Maker

Today our coffee maker broke
I feel that I am a broken bloke
Nothing to pep me up this morning
It feels as though I'm mourning
The instant feeling of being alive
Especially after four or five!
I feel as miserable as I can be
I suppose I'll have to resort to tea!

Annoying Attraction

Attracting like a magnet
Doing nothing, just waiting
To slowly draw you in
As hard as you try
And god you try
It's always there
Beckoning you
Resisting is pointless
It's like an annoying habit
Irresistible but irritating
Never quite the same
Always something new
Luring you into its grasp.
It's no good the temptation is too great
You have to go and see
The jumbled goods for sale
In the centre aisle at Aldi!!

On Time

I really hate to be late
For an important date
When it has to be eight
I simply won't wait
To set off early no debate

To arrive on time that is fine
Ten minutes early that's divine
Five minutes late now that's a crime
I know this issue is simply all mine
I have a thing about being on time.

Inner Peace

Searching for inner peace
Tantalisingly close
But often out of reach
A wish for calmness to descend
To lift life's pressures
Ease the burden on people we depend
Be accepting of our uniqueness
To be what we are
To live life free and worry less.

A Time to Glow

The autumn of our life
The time to glow
To show the world
Who we really are
Not shackled by
Rules and regulations
Institutions that bind us
Corporate life that blinds us
To the true meaning of
Living and giving
Embracing human spirit
Enjoying every minute
This is the golden hour
Where life's experience
Remains the only constant
The only defining power
Of our mortal existence.

Armistice

I tried to write about Armistice
But found I haven't the vocabulary
To express the emotion felt by the nation
Much better scribes than me
Have described in incredible detail
How ordinary men fell
Defending the freedom of a nation
A nation with which I am incredibly proud
To be a descendant of those brave men
Who must never be forgotten
Nor lost their lives in vain
For peace and freedom
Must be
Everyone's ultimate aim.

Shopping with my Mum

It was quite an occasion
Going to town
Dressed to the nines
In my Oxford Bags
With buttons aplenty
Platform soles shoes
Big jumbo collars
I was only going with my mum
But it felt so exciting
We got on the number 14
It was a blue and white
Corporation double decker
You could smoke on top deck
Not that I was old enough
But seeing the Avenues
From such a lofty position
I felt like a king.
My mum always had her list
Errands and pressies
And the odd treat for me
I used to follow her
Around shop after shop
Bustling with folk
Clutching their bags
She used to love Hammonds
A great department store
She occasionally splashed out
Lunch at Picadish yippee
A plate of chips and baked beans
Went down great with squash
Being a fashionable lad I nagged and nagged
For a visit to C&A for some trendy rags
She would always give in

And let me have my way
Maybe I should have said thank you
A little more that day
It was soon time to get back on the bus
A little tired from traipsing around
To find that last item on my mum's list
The one that nobody had
The one that they were always getting in
Next week
How times have changed
No more exciting visits to town
All replaced with a click on a mouse
That item that nobody had
Is always there
But god it's nowhere near as much fun
As those days shopping with my mum!

Playing on my bogie

Fun for me
When I was young
Was playing on a bogie
A fruit box, plank
A piece of rope
And four wheels from a pram
We took it in turns
To be the driver
With a friend
To do the pushing
Best thing
Was when we found a hill
That feeling of elation
Speeding perilously
Dangerously, irresponsibly
Close to a tree
Now these things
Weren't the most robust
Often falling apart
Wheels buckled
Bits fell off
The steering locked
In left turn
But we cherished
Our bogies
Riding with pride
Terrorising old ladies
On pavements, parks
And down tenfoots
Pretending
we were Graham Hill
There were no PlayStations
In those days

Just home made entertainment
This was the time
When the youth was free
When the best thing in life
Was playing on my bogie.

Clinging On

Clinging courageously
To the branch of the tree
In the autumn breeze
A leaf like trapeze

Waiting for the final moment
The final component
Of the summer past
One we all hoped would last

The hazy autumn sun shines
A spotlight that defines
The last leaf's outstanding beauty
But even then there is a duty

To fall into line with grounded others
A show of solidarity, nature's brothers
A single breath is all it took
For the final leaf to fall into the brook.

Pumped Up

I felt as though
I was flying through the air
Without a care in the world
Trees and hedges
Passed in a blur
Hills seemed flatter
Slopes seemed faster
I could raise my eyes
From endless grey tarmac
Take in the mist
Far back in the distance
Have the breath
To engage in light chatter
On subjects irrelevant
Really didn't matter
But the freedom felt liberating
Almost exhilarating
To a point where
I didn't want it to end
I couldn't comprehend
The incredible difference
The lack of feeling
Of trudging through treacle
Of aching limbs
Of feeling unable
To keep up with my mate
On our biking date
I couldn't believe
That a little more air
Pumped in the tyre
Could reignite my fire
My long lost desire
To enjoy the release

That notion of peace
Of riding my bike
In God's country.

Relax?

Why can't I relax?
Stop my mind turning
Whirring with thoughts
Of disparate dimension

Why can't I relax?
Stop feeling agitated
Buzzing in motion
A dire disposition

Why can't I relax?
Stop my pulse racing
Chatter in my head
An irrational emotion

Why can't I relax?
Take a deep breath
Nullify the negative
A positive inclination

Running in the Rain

It's a pain
My Mrs
Won't run in the rain
Chances of a shower
Won't step out
Nothing in my power
Will get her moving
Even when
Her hair needs doing
Maybe she thinks
A bit of water
And she shrinks
Frankly I'm frustrated
When I run in the rain
I feel alive full of life, elated
I'm going to get her out
Even if it kills me
Can't wait for the drought!

FOMO

There's a fear
Not of spiders
Or heights
Or snakes in the grass
Not of public speaking
Confined spaces
Dentists or darkness
There's a fear
Of missing out
Of what?
Of love
Of kids growing up
A fond kiss
Of nature in its splendour
No it's a fear
Of missing out on a selfie
With some C class wannabe
Of not living a life
Of someone we want to be
They call this FOMO
Caused by those who self promo
On Facebook Twitter, and Instagram
Who each day bathe in their glory
To let the world into their fake story.

Hair Today and Gone Tomorrow

My locks are getting long
Well those that still belong
That haven't fallen out
If only more would sprout
I'm sat here in the barbers
Between two youths in their Parkers
Flicking through pages of the Sun
Glancing at page three just for fun
"Whose next" she calls unenthusiastically
Glancing at each other almost apologetically
"I think it's me?" I meekly call
Questioning whether it's me at all
No one challenges my place in the queue
I'm told to sit in the middle pew
"What's it going to be today?"
"Do your best" is all I can say
Short at the sides
On the top you decide
Soon she is busily buzzing
Quite efficient simply no fussing
Politely she asks "How are you dear?"
"Have you been on your holiday this year?"
Followed by "are you ready for Christmas?"
I ask enquiringly "how is business?"
"Very good" she replied smiling
Busily sorting out the styling
Finally she finished with the clippers
Some deft work with her little scissors
"How's that for you sir?"
"Very good" I do concur
To be fair it's far far too late
To put hair back upon my pate
So whether I like it or not

This is definitely what I've got
To suffer for the next 6 weeks or so
Until back to the barbers I will have to go!

Costa

Cupping my coffee
At Costa Coffee
Watching people
Normal people
Some in deep conversation
Others sitting all alone
Some waiting patiently
Some passing the time of day
Watching life pass them by
A lady with her latte
Skimming through the dailies
A businessman delving
Deep into his attaché
A family meeting
With baby bawling
Others trawling through
Social Media
Phone in hand fixated,
Isolated in their own little world
A couple share a precious moment
Gently she strokes her coffee cup
Lovingly he stares into her eyes
Old and young are gathered today
It's interesting to watch the world at play!

Bingeing on Boxsets

Curled up on the couch
Bingeing on a box set
Regular life is set on hold
Weight increasing ouch!

Feels like I'm addicted
One after another they come
Unable to turn the off switch
Regular life restricted

Characters become so real
Extended family members
See deep into their soul
Emotion you can feel

Then end feels like a death
A gaping hole in life
Time to get back to reality
And finally catch my breath

Road Trip

I used to love a good road trip
To destinations far and wide
A week in Cornwall always quite hip
An excited family by your side

My wife always the map reader
Plotting the position along the route
An occasional wrong turn to deceive her
An infrequent expletive to boot

The kids in the back quite bored
"Are we there yet?" the regular cry
"Please be quiet" we both implored
"Dad I need to wee" came the reply

There was little to entertain us
An occasional game of eye spy
First one in the car to spot a bus
Anything to get us by

Speeding along at your own pace
Nothing to slow you down
The Sunday driver the only disgrace
Driving like a clown

Today the world's so different
Speed cameras to catch you out
Always feel quite innocent
When speed limits you do flout

Then there's the awful sat navigation
A battle axe worse than the wife
Taking us to some dodgy destination

Where I never been in my life

I used to love a good road trip

To destinations far and wide

But now frustrated I'll let rip

At congested roads I can't abide!

The Promise of a Shower

The train of terror
Emptied its human cargo
Onto a simple siding
Wretched, weak, and weary
No clues, mistaken optimism
Personal possessions
Items dear to those present
Diamond rings, everyday things
Discarded forever
Lines of lost souls
Awaited their fate
Two walks ahead
Two tracks
Two different outcomes
The strong singled out
The weak
The young
Women with babies
One final walk
Horribly hoodwinked with...
The promise of a shower

The Daily Commute

The alarm bell rings
Awoken from a broken sleep
I slap it on snooze
Another nine minutes
Counting down the seconds
To the second chime
A little whine
One foot at a time
Eventually I'm out of bed
Slowly I shuffle to the bathroom
Shit, shower and shave
A look in the mirror
God my head does hurt
Have I got an ironed shirt?
Two socks that match?
Now where's my wallet and watch?
Have I time for breakfast?
Look at the clock
Late again miss my All-Bran
Get to the car all frozen over
Where did I put my bloody de-icer?
Fingers freezing I pray
Car will start again today
Queue at the junction
Old man being very cautious
No breakfast inside me
Feeling rather nauseous
Traffic creeping crawling slowly
Getting nowhere fast
Radio on listening to Kylie
Time ticks on now getting in a stew
I hear there's another accident
On the bloody M62!

I look again at the clock on the dash
"Oh no" I bawl
I've missed my early morning
Conference call!
Can things get any worse
Get stuck try to reverse
There's no way out
Will have to stick it out!
Thank god we're moving
Playing lane lottery
Always the one in the wrong 'un
Fingers tapping rather jittery
Surely this nightmare will end
On arriving at work I try to defend
To my boss why I'm late
He won't allow any debate
"Get up earlier" he commands
Can't make him understand
The world was against me
On this the worst pursuit
The trials and tribulations
Of the daily commute.

Man Flu

Creeping stealthily

No warning

One minute well

Next minute hell

Head banging

Throat scratching

Breathing wheezing

Continuously coughing

No end

To the misery

That I am causing

To all around me!

Old Men with Big Ears

Great old men with fantastic big ears
Scars and wrinkles for souvenirs
Wisdom from a misspent youth
Only one remaining natural tooth

Great old men with enormous big noses
Proud as punch of their prize winning roses
Children love to hear their stories
Loved labour hated the Tories

Great old men with aching backs
Never wear coats always Macs
Used to smoke twenty roll your own
Not much fun when you're all alone

Great old men with a walking stick
Nothing on face value, forever a sceptic
Reflecting on simple hard working lives
Shared with their long suffering wives.

Where Have All The Kids Gone?

Where have all the kids gone?
Grown up before their time?
They don't want to be a cygnet
Would rather be a swan!

Is this down to pushy parents?
Wanting their kids to fulfil
Their unaccomplished dreams
Before becoming adolescents

There seems no time to be a child
To play with toys unplugged
To enjoy life without responsibility
To do things wonderful and wild

We cheer at kids who can sing
Like divas or pop superstars
We marvel at their maturity
The potential wealth they'll bring

Give kids the air to breathe free
Don't suffocate them with ambition
Deprive them of their childhood
For they'll achieve what you can't foresee.

A Little Bit of Piece

What's behind the numerous green doors?
Adorning the majestic, historic three floors.
Like an advent calendar, an exciting surprise
Shopkeepers selling all kinds of supplies

Restaurants and bars hidden in corners
Selling mulled wine and other winter warmers
Fairground attractions adorn the square
A stunning space for all to share

Under the arches Christmas revellers gather
Imbibed with beer to ignite the chatter
Twinkly lights shining bright for all to see
A festive scene to fill your heart with glee

An historic gem, a quadrangle of delight
A magical place on this cold winter's night
Not in Paris, New York or Montreal
Will you find such a gem as the Halifax Piece Hall.

In My Head....

It felt like I was the grandad
It didn't make me mad just a little sad
Energetic youth all around me
Worrying 'bout my dodgy knee

Here I was on the Futsol course
Not sat on my sofa watching Morse
The classroom bit I took in my stride
Answered some questions tried not to hide

Now here was the tricky bit
Now I thought I was quite fit
In the hall youths buzzing around me
I felt rooted to the ground like a tree.

Then it came to me being in goal
Stopped a few shots good for the soul
Every time I made a save
Ironic cheers a Mexican wave.

Finally time for the big match
Worried I wouldn't come up to scratch
Fortunately roll on roll off subs
Had I visited too many pubs ?

I was only on for a minute
Clearly they thought this was my limit
I only gave the ball away twice
They scored a goal a heavy price

Maybe it's time to hang up my boots
Follow some more leisurely pursuits.
In my mind I am a lot younger

Body reminds me I'm not ...bugger!

White Horse and Griffin

Sleeping with history
Among whispering walls
Slanted windows
Old wooden doors
A creaking stair
A wall brick bare
Ghosts of the past
Their futures cast
Explorers plotted
James Cook, William Scoresby
The heritage thickens
The writer Charles Dickens
Candlelight, log fires
Heightening the senses
Awakening desires
Eyes closed imagining
Those who've travelled
Through these ancient vestibules
Whose lives unravelled
Wise men and occasional fools
Sleeping with history
Endless legends magical mystery.

Motivation

The secret of motivation
Is managing the emotion
Being a positive inspiration
Spreading a sense of elation
When all goes well; recognition
When things go wrong don't dampen ambition
Create a sense of coalition and competition
Not attrition nor inquisition
Motivation not a text book rendition
But a human to human exhilarating condition.

A Year Ago Today

A year ago today
I am not sure what inspired me
What drove me
To write a poem
A poem about my state of mind
Maybe to find myself
On this new journey
A life changing journey
Not since school had I written a rhyme
Guess I hadn't had the time
So therapeutic did I find the process
That delved into the recesses of a mixed up mind
I made up this mind to write daily
A poem about life, my life
Others' lives, society
Moments of history
Things inconsequential
Occasionally sentimental
Sometimes monumental
365 poems later
One year older
Potentially wiser
A sense of achievement
Thoughts committed to verse
Some good, some bad,
Some joyful, some sad
Some downright awful
A commitment many thought was a fad
That my butterfly mind
Would find a tad
Too taxing, demanding.
I found it therapeutic
As mellowing as music

Taking me to a different place
A space in which I could
ponder
The world around me
Take the time to appreciate
Help me negotiate this new life
A new life of freedom
Time rich, choices endless
Free from the stress
Of nine to five
The daily drive
More time with those that matter
Time for a little chatter
To be more present
Try to be more pleasant
Less need for the antidepressant
Yes today I achieved a goal
A dream that seemed out of reach
They say if you dream it
Have a positive mentality
It will happen
Well today that dream became a reality.

Drivel

This is a trifle trivial
A poem not political
Pretty petty, partly potty
Lacking lucid language
A bonkers brainstorm
Bordering on bollocks
A frivolous frolic
Meandering meaninglessly
Ebbing and flowing
Perpetually pouring
Mind numbing nonsense
Best before breakfast
A bonanza of banal boredom
Designed to drive you dotty
Depending on your disposition
A frisson of fantasy
Not meant for Auntie
Hard of hearing Hattie
Partly passing for prose
More like a double dose
A death defying drivel
This is crap official
Stunningly superficial
Bereft of anything beneficial
Waiting, wanting the final whistle
Wishing this pissing poem would end
Fishing for a final full stop
Stop, stop, stop
This is a stinker
Hook line and sinker!!

It?s Finally Over!

Sixty days of preparation
Spending money no hesitation
Wrist hurting from writing cards
Happy Christmas yours regards
Trimming the tree with decorations
Collected from numerous nations
Ears hurting from Christmas songs
Presents bought to right the wrongs
Supermarket slogs to buy the turkey
Some little additions some quite quirky
Presents wrapped all glistening and shiny
Mine to the wife is a little tiny
A few glasses on Christmas Eve
At last a time to relax and breathe
No young kids so we're aloud to snooze
Just as well, as we drank too much booze
Turkey stuffed and in the oven
Table set for about a dozen
Queen's speech comes and goes
Glued to the set some festive shows
Dinner downed with a glass of bubbly
Feeling stuffed, bloated and chubby
A few silly games to pass the time
Gin and T and a glass of wine
Comfy chair another snooze
Turkey sandwiches even more booze
Time for bed drunk too much ale
Need to get up for the Boxing Day sale
As if I needed more bloody shopping
Coffee and cake to stop me dropping
Twenty bags for life
Some clothes for my wife
50 percent off what a bargain

Even something for the garden
Sixty days of preparation
A great deal of expectation
Finally over till next year
Ok then just one more beer!

I Forgot My Phone

Yesterday I forgot my phone
I didn't feel all alone
I didn't miss interacting with social media
Or checking out holidays on Expedia
No need to look every second for mail
Or whether on eBay I had made a sale
Didn't matter how many extra followers
Or Catch Up watching an episode of the Borrowers
No need to play Words with Friends
Or looking for the latest Twitter trends
A check for hits on my blog could wait
Or recording on Lose It my current weight
My online bank account wouldn't change
Could exist without knowing the sterling exchange
Didn't need to snap every waking minute
Or that my credit card had hit its limit
Life could go on without another notification
Or checking on Facebook a friend's vacation
House prices didn't collapse, not checking out Zoopla
Or buying trash on Amazon that you thought was super
Used my brain instead of looking up things on Google
Had a debate about the many ways of spelling McDougal
Yesterday I forgot my phone
I didn't feel all alone
Instead there was animated conversation
A heightened sense of relaxation
Conversation flowed with ease
Devoid of this 21st century social disease

New Beginnings

It is a time for reflection

It is a time to be grateful

It is a time for affection

It is a time to be thoughtful

It is a time to appreciate

It is a time to be excited

It is a time to contemplate

It is a time to be clear sighted

But most of all it is a desire

For health, love and happiness free from dangers

Making a difference, to help to inspire

Let's raise a glass of cheer

To our friends, loved ones and strangers

Here's to a wonderful Happy New Year

Back of my Dad's Car

When I was young
It was an adventure
To travel afar in the
Back of my Dad's car
There were no rules
No health and safety
No buckles and belts
Harnesses and boosters
Standing between the seats
Chatting to my dad
Pretending to drive
Fighting with my brother
Pulling faces at another
Driver in the following car
Kneeling on the plastic seats
Cold in winter
Hot in summer
You know the type
Dad puffing on his pipe
Creating a smog
Couldn't see a thing
As we filled in
Our I-Spy books
Looked for number plates
Or strange road signs
Coke and crisps
He would bring
When parked up
At a pub
While he popped in
For a pint
We didn't mind
Waiting alone outside

It was an adventure
To travel afar in the
Back of my Dad's car.

I?m a little scared...

I'm a little scared
Of getting old
Of being well past
My sell by date

I'm a little scared
Of losing my mind
Not being able to think
Or contemplate

I'm a little scared
Of losing my function
My independence
Not able to operate

I'm a little scared
Of forgetting
My name or people
Who I used to call my mate

I'm a little scared
Of frustrating
My wife and kids
While wallowing in a mixed up state

I'm a little scared
Is it down to me?
Can I not control?
Is it simply fortune and fate?

The Morning After

The morning after
The mind's a fog
Bleary bulging eyes
Battling through smog
Incapable of anything, far too weak
Mumbling and muttering
Can't get words out
Incapable of palpable speak
Stomach churning
Must start learning
Must be more discerning
Start refusing any more boozing
Start remembering the last time
On drinking too much wine
I committed to refrain
From over indulging ever again.

The Fitting Room

Women with their dresses

Swishing

Me outside the fitting room

Sitting

Waiting for my opinion

Wishing

I didn't have to give one!

My Life

I'm full of angst with society
Struggling with my sobriety
Needing to fit in
What does this really mean
Does this mean
Being normal
Ok could I be abnormal
Try to fade into the distance
Show little resistance
To a world of nonsense
Of little consequence
No I must stand out
Shout out
For what is right
Take this human plight
Embrace it, love it
Show the world how much
Love I bestow, I shower it
This is my life
I own it!

The Mask

Don't hide behind your mask
Be brave let your feelings fly free
Let the world see you for what you are
Not what you think the world wants to see
Beauty lies within you, deep inside
Not what is plastered upon your face
Wisdom comes with years
Be proud of those years
Sketched indelibly upon your face
You are unique, a miracle of your existence
Not an homogeneous clone
Be proud of who you are
Hug life and you will not be alone.

Will

The light dims
It seems as though
It won't shine brightly
Will never again

The mist descends
Shrouding the world
In a hazy glow
Will not go

Life's full eclipse
Blackening skies
As though undercover
Will not recover

Will I ever
Forever have the will
To be who I want to be
By my free will.

IVR Blues

Hello you've reached the interactive voice response blues
All calls will be recorded for disciplinary purposes
Doesn't matter which of the following numbers you choose
They will all be put through to our terrible services
Now let me ask you questions for our security
It helps if you have recently done your family history
Tell me what was your mother's favourite maiden over?
Thank you now did you ever go to a school in Dover?
Ok tell me the name of the first girl you called pet?
And the third digit of the password you always forget?
Well done you you've now passed security
We'll put you on hold for the rest of eternity
Your call is so very unimportant to us
Who wants to hear about all your fuss
Well anyway here's some Fleetwood Mac
On our tea break, will answer when we get back
To let us know whose best placed not to deal with you
Please press one, two or three
We don't give a toss you won't get through
Eventually someone will answer you see
I'm terribly nonplused about your wait
Now just for security can you tell me the date
And the hour of when you were born
Plus the 83 digits on your card would be great
Hello my name is Vijay sorry I mean Shaun
How can I make your life a misery today
Sorry our computers have all gone down
Can you visit our branch in the neighbouring town?
Anything else I can't help you with today?
Before you go can you complete our survey?
You'll be asked to mark us between 10 and 9
A wonderful big fat bonus will then be all mine
Goodbye!

Life's Last Moments

Five minute warning
Life's last moments
Played out slowly
Too slowly, only time
To think, reflect
On those we will leave behind
Memories once distant
Come flooding into focus
Childhood recollections
Mums loving arms holding you
Scenes of forgotten love
Fly into clear crystal view
Dad picking you up when you fall
Times we played bat and ball

Four minute warning
Life's last moments
Played out slowly
Beautiful moments
Of life's history
Days in the sun
A long hot summer
Playing soldiers with my brother
Tenacious tennis with a friend
Whose early death
I could never comprehend
Grandparents undying love
Looking after me from above
Childhood dreams
I thought would never end

Three minute warning
Life's last moments

Played out slowly
A lifelong love revealed
In that first glance
I knew I believed
She was the one
A burning fire, a romance
No one could extinguish
Or replace the anguish
Of ever being apart
The strongest hurt
There will ever be
Knowing that you
Will remember me
by planting
Our favourite tree.

Two minute warning
Life's last moments
Played out slowly
The first time
I held him in my arms
His innocent smile
The intense love
For the sweet son of mine
Taking him to the trains
Seeing his face light up
As steam filled the air
Giving a little prayer
That life would continue
Like this for ever

One minute warning
Life's last moments
Played out slowly
A family complete
A beautiful girl

Full of life

A beautiful ballerina

A tough tackling midfielder

I couldn't ask for more

Whatever paths we take

In our family

There will always be a bond

For eternity and beyond

No minute warning

Life's last moments

Played out...

A Box With No Light

He was locked in a box
A black box with no light
He was afraid
He could not see
He reached out
Felt the smoothness
Of the sides from within
There was a silence
Broken by him
Breathing in
Breathing out
Breathing in
Breathing out
He wanted to shout out
He needed someone
To hear him
To help him
To set him free
Help him to see
But
There was no one
No one to hear
His silent screams
No one to see his dreams
Turn to a quagmire of torment
Of disturbing discontent
He was resigned to a life
Existing locked in a box
A box with no light.

Locked in Love

Two hearts
Learning to beat
As one
Love growing stronger
Our time on earth
Is not done
My hope
My desire
Our energy
Smouldering
Like a smoking gun
Nothing will ever, ever
Tear us apart
The padlock
To our hearts
Locked together forever!

The Flame

A flicker of a flame
Seemingly innocent
Dances discreetly
Disguising its intentions
Fooling with the beauty
Of its balletic movement
Rapidly the intensity
The energy soon
Becomes the enemy
A single dancer
Seemlessly joined
By a resilient partner
Cajoling others
To unite in the dance
Of destruction
An endless leaping chorus
Creates a frenetic
Fierce angry power
Consuming all
That dares to
Prevent its progression
A devastating finale
A woeful tragedy
A flicker of a flame
At first intoxicating
Knows no limits
Till it brings the final
Curtain down.

Mood

Hiding away
Like a bug
Under a rock
It lays there
Away from prying eyes
Invisible, silent
Dormant
Content for the moment
Until it's awoken
From slumber
It creeps out
When least expected
Gets under the skin
Crawls into reality
Creating turbulence
Wave upon wave
Of sadness and heartache
Of shame and destruction
An unwanted disruption
To life's gentle rhythms
Pray go away
My deep dark desperate
Mood!

Searching

Searching, searching
Searing heat soothed
By delicate summer showers
Calmness induced
By melodious medicine

Searching, searching
Cravings mitigated
By nature's nourishment
Creaking bones eased
By lazy days on a sun drenched beach

Searching, searching
Anxious mind comforted
By a friend who listens without judgement or accusation
Stressed soul massaged
By a cool shimmering pool

Searching searching
Volume of life reduced
By wise words on a page
Connection with family bonded
By a compendium of life's lessons

Searching searching
An infatuation with wisdom healed
By seeking solace in others
Emptiness and loneliness filled
By connecting with the one that's cherished

Searching searching
Until it's too late....