

THOUGHTS TO PONDER OVER

Alan .S. Jeeves



Presented by

My poetic Side 

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< ~ Three Score Years and Ten ~ > --The Modernisation of Psalm 90-- -A Diatribe-

~ ~ ~ The Lion and the Honey ~ ~ ~ (The Riddle of Samson)

What can be sweeter than honey, sir?
(Asked the lion of the man);
Bees collecting from larkspur,
They work as intent as they can.
Building a waxen honeycomb,
Forming a nectarous vat,
Making a nest in their home-sweet-home...
What could be sweeter than that?

What is as strong as a lion?
(Asked the queen bee of the man);
A strength which is equal to iron,
A force to dispel any plan.
Power to challenge his foes ~
An abundance of courage in store;
Puissance from his head to his toes
Endorsed by the might of his roar.

So what could be sweeter than sweet?
Asked Samson to thirty more men;
And when can a lion be beat?
He inquired of the one score and ten.
But if sweeter than honey is love,
With homage, devotion and trust;
The lion's brawn can't be above
The igneous might of man's lust.

ASJ

~ ~ **The Purple Headed Mountain** ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ (A Villanelle) ~ ~ ~

The purple headed mountainside
~ They sing it in their Sunday pews ~
Where golden eagles soar and glide.

Here cackling, calling birds abide,
Each winging pecks of airborne news;
The purple headed mountainside.

Where once the wolf, in dander, cried
An echo roiling to infuse,
Where golden eagles soar and glide.

For shades and coloured hues provide
(With tintured yellows, reds and blues)
The purple headed mountainside.

Above where peaks and clouds collide;
Aloft on high in ones and twos
Where golden eagles soar and glide.

So nearer heaven here I hide
And here alone is where I choose;
The purple headed mountainside
Where golden eagles soar and glide.

ASJ

Your Budgie Loves You

Your budgie loves you dearly,
He loves his gilt abode;
He really loves you, clearly,
Abounding love is owed.
You perch-ased him a lovely swing,
He loves to flit and roost,
He loves to swing and do his thing -
His boredom is reduced.

You pamper him, he loves your stroke,
He risks a loving peck;
He nips your finger, that's no joke!
But he thinks 'What the heck!'
Your budgie loves you ~ his best friend ~
And sings and chat's with you;
He'll be your soulmate to the end
Repaying love that's due.

You open out your window wide
He loves the draughty flow;
He breathes the fresh air deep inside
And loves the breezy blow.
You open up his gilded door
To feed him lovely grain;
He loves the open window for
He's never seen again.

ASJ

When The Day Comes O'er The Hillside

As the day rides o'er the hillside,
A violet-primrose, subtle splash;
Galloping, gleaming, glowing day-tide
In gilded sunlit charging dash.
Wherein the light soaked early morn
Sunstreaks blissly dance at will;
A single cloud, detached, forlorn
Drifting by above the hill.

A silhouette, a hovered bird,
A cameo shadow in the east,
Reposing, high, without a word
Silent, searching for his feast.
As far below him field mice scurry
Darting in/out twixt the grasses;
Hiding out and all a flurry,
Laying low till peril passes.

Salmon leaping in the stream
Rippled splashes touching down.
Starting off the day's regime,
Glinting tones of golden brown.
Chasing off the last of night,
In the contest daylight wins;
Triumphant with the cool first light
Here is where the day begins.

ASJ

Two Hundred Smiling Orphans

Two hundred smiling orphans
Playing in the sun.

Two hundred smiling orphans
Jolly, having fun.

Two hundred smiling orphans
Protected by their master...

Two hundred smiling orphans
Destined for disaster.

Two hundred smiling orphans
Understanding their new ways.

Two hundred smiling orphans
Enjoying happy days.

Taught by Janusz Korczak,
Father to them all,

Two hundred smiling orphans
Learning to walk tall.

Two hundred smiling orphans
Trapped within a war.

Two hundred smiling orphans
Blind to what's in store,

Two hundred smiling orphans
Timid, weak and shy...

Two hundred smiling orphans
Each condemned to die.

Two hundred smiling orphans
Marching down the street,

Dressed in finest clothing,

Grand shoes upon their feet.

Two hundred smiling orphans
In his wake like ducks,

Led by Janusz Korczak...

Author of their books.

Two hundred smiling orphans

Transported far away.

Two hundred smiling orphans

Facing their last day.

Two hundred smiling orphans

Taken for a stroll,

Along with Janusz Korczak...

Father of their soul.

Two hundred smiling orphans

Arrived at their new place.

Two hundred smiling orphans

Marching on apace.

Two hundred smiling orphans

Alighting from the train...

But they and Janusz Korczak

Would never smile again.

Two hundred smiling orphans

New their dolor is told.

Two hundred smiling orphans

Their memoir to uphold.

Two hundred smiling orphans

Going on before.

For they, and Janusz Korczak,

Will smile for evermore.

ASJ

Tobacco, Rum and Brandy

Waves pound wild 'gainst coastal rocks,
The night is black as coal;
Covert, away from mooring docks
Ten smugglers give their all.

The moon illuminates the sky
It highlights men and boats;
Oilskins donned to keep them dry
As sea-surf salts their coats.

A lookout stationed up on high
To sound the signal when,
He notes a troop patrolling nigh...
He spies the excise men.

Below him are his hearty mates,
Each adept and handy,
Unloading scores of casks and crates...
Tobacco, rum and brandy.

Secreted well in ghostly caves
They store their pirate booty;
Thwarted, by the crashing waves,
The taxmen halt their duty.

As daylight breaks upon the beach,
The veil of darkness shed;
The ten are safely beyond reach,
At rest, at home, in bed.

ASJ

There's nothing in the night like the sound of the wind

When all the land is sleeping tight
There is a noise within the night
A noise to touch the sinews of your mind.
To those who hear it at its best
Exalt its sound, as others rest,
And thank the lord he gave it to mankind.

She hums and blows her gentle breezes,
Comes and goes just as she pleases,
Spreads pastoral verses as her theme;
And when the twilight fills the air
Her vivid strains are ever there
For anyone who worships her esteem.

Her voice caresses mighty trees,
Bends their limbs with awesome ease,
Oaks submit and beeches stand-a-quiver.
She shakes their leaves when passing through,
Sings a chorus just for you,
A symphony of joy to make you shiver.

At times when anger doth prevail
She tests her strength and blows a gale
She proves the very essence of her skill.
She fans her substance all around,
Her lusty bluster so profound,
She punishes the ground with all her will.

But she knows it's daylight soon
So then she sings a different tune
And bestows a temperate ballad clear and bright;
And when the darkness leaves the earth
She whistles warm for all she's worth;

There's no sound like the wind makes in the night.

ASJ

The Trembling Willow

A willow trembles in the breeze
And stoops in awe as angels sneeze;
Quaking feebly to its knees,
Bending, doleful, if you please.

A day, as this, when squalls blow wild
The willow cries ~ as like a child;
Deserted, sad, forlorn, beguiled,
All aloof, left out, exiled.

Now her branches droop away
Blenching down throughout the day;
Keeping blusts of gusts at bay
Protected from the rainy spray.

Underfoot a lonely duck
Shelters in a babbling brook;
Dabbling in a shady nook
She, safe and sound, her haven took.

Then up above the daylight seeps,
In the sky the sunlight peeps;
Thankful for the faith she keeps...
The trembling willow gently weeps.

ASJ

The Tiny Tawny Fledgling

A tiny tawny torso
With tiny tawny eyes.
In tiny tawny cautious flows
The tiny tawny flies.

A tiny tawny heartbeat
With tiny tawny pace;
A tiny tawny look upon
A tiny tawny face.

Tiny tawny feathers
Of tiny tawny brown.
Tiny tawny eyebrows make
A tiny tawny frown.

A tiny tawny tinted breast
So tiny tawny cute.
A tiny tawny voice to call
A tiny tawny hoot.

Two tiny tawny wing tips
For tiny tawny flight
The tiny tender tawny owl
Takes off into the night.

ASJ

The Strutting Peacock

Clear the way! he's coming through,
Feathers vivid, green and blue;
Step aside! make way for him
Strutting out, upright and prim.

With his nose high in the air
Gazing here, there ~ everywhere;
Wending forward, left then right,
Promenading on, he's such a sight.

He spies his girlfriend in the kale,
He heads her way and fans his tale;
A thousand eyes appear to see...
But she has only eyes for he.

He inches close in his best livery,
Her knees go weak and shaky-shivery;
She clucks-a-cluck to clear her throat
As she admires his vibrant coat.

She waits for him to firstly speak
Before she opens her own beak;
He finds the spiel (as suitors do),
Resplendent there in peacock blue.

He hopes there'll be no stormy weather,
He stretches down and plucks a feather;
She accedes the gift, it makes her colour,
He's acting like a true bird puller.

Then the farmer comes along
Chirping out his merry song;
Scattering corn replete and free

In a peahen's world it's time for tea.

ASJ

The Sparrow Hawk, the Keeper and I

As a boy I applauded her magnificent figure;
As a boy I watched her fly, in the sky, so high.
As a boy I admired her mighty vigour;
As a boy I watched her deftly swoop and swirl.
As a boy my intransigent senses she was able to trigger.

She was coloured golden brown as she flew;
She flashed and dazzled in the early morning sunshine.
She commanded the air as she soared straight and true;
Her eyes could see far ~ much farther than those of you or I.
Below nothing could obscure her view of the ground, bathed in dew.

She adorned the sky as the night-time darkness was done;
She was so beautiful against the backdrop of the heavens.
She was seen at a time when blackness was on the run;
She, alone, ruled the universe ~ that is, but for one ~
Beneath her prowled the keeper in this spats and breeches ~ and his gun.

Morning came to me easily, I ardently welcomed her here;
How could I not be in awe of this special time?
Now I could join the sparrowhawk, see her dive and veer.
She paid no heed to me ~ why should she? ~ I was her friend, you see!
She called out her 'Good Morning' to me as I lent her my ear.

She flew in the peaceful stillness of the cool, clean air;
Silent, the world was silent about us.
Then my exalted solitude was dashed, standing there;
A violent crack, a puff of smoke..... and she was gone,
I frantically searched the sky but she was nowhere.

As a man I recall my sparrowhawk, anamnesis she still dictates
(She even tumbled lifeless to the ground with dignity and grace).
As a man I may, myself, in time arrive at heaven's golden gates;

She knows that I will come and not betray her...
But she is ever patient and has faith ~ she awaits

ASJ

The Shimmering Rainbow Trout

Leaping, catching raindrops
And then the sun is out;
Twisting, see the spectrum
About the rainbow trout.

His home is wet and weedy
Beneath the turquoise skies;
His hide is where it's reedy ~
His day spent swatting flies.

Vaulting from a splashy pool,
Angling for a tasty meal
Set up for a dainty dish,
A flitting, dancing fly to steal.

But I am here to catch him
And take him home for tea,
With my rod and tackle
And bogus flies with me.

I cast, he springs and misses
Today he swims with luck;
He lands back in the water...
For now he's off the hook.

ASJ

The Scarlet and the Black

Blood red blooms with foliage green,
Dancing, bowing in the air.
Paint an image so serene
The sweetest scarlet lady fair.
Meadows, fields of floral show
To the landscape, briefly lent;
Come to me where here I grow ~
Lie with me amongst my scent.

Blood red blooms in golden light
Smiling skyward t'ward the blue;
Morning comes with evening's flight
As sunbeams start the day anew.
Gaze on me, peruse my poise,
Enjoy my sanguine, wooing charm;
Hear me sing, consume my noise ~
Lie with me amongst the calm.

Blood red blooms, upright and tall,
In proudly blazed eccentric rows;
Form their rouge dendritic sprawl
Where their seed chose to appose.
Here within a rural sea
Swimming, floating as a shoal;
Immerse your being, set you free ~
Lie with me and bathe your soul.

Blood red blooms of poppies gay,
Battling in a wind so strong;
Sent to blow them all away
And sweep their countenance along.
Blood red hues ~ now black as hell,
The winds of war have caused them weep;

Stay you here, this field you fell ~
Lie with me and soundly sleep

ASJ

The Mother Owl Awakening

As the dark meets daytime skies
A true majestic creature flies
Seeking out her prey;
Gliding on the evening breeze
High above the woodland trees;
The closing of the day.

Ears that never miss a thing
Torso floating on the wing
Cruising o'er the ground;
Talons set in ready poise
Waiting for the slightest noise,
Circling all around.

Assisted by her curling beak
Her fine tuned senses start to seek,
Scanning over field;
Eyes that scout for living things
Trusting that the twilight brings
A fruitful yield.

Suddenly her goal she spies
Way below her quarry lies
She musters all her zeal;
She sets her line, sinews alive,
She marks her target, starts to dive;
She wins her meal.

She rises high with kill in mouth
She alters course, she's heading south,
Making for her nest;
She reaches home, her fledglings wait
She feeds them all a tasty plate

But she won't rest.

She takes to flight to quest again
She makes her way through wind and rain
Searching everywhere;
Moonlit feathers glittering gold,
Perfect, gleaming wings unfold,
The mistress of the air.

ASJ

The Golden Tear Of Fall

A golden leaf falls to the ground,
As she, the tree, now sheds a tear;
It tumbles down with ne'er a sound.

A lifeless frond, crisp and browned
No longer green this time of year;
A golden leaf falls to the ground.

With tumult blowing all around
The leafy laden atmosphere,
It tumbles down with ne'er a sound.

Then gently floating downward bound
Rustic, wrinkled, disheveled, sere;
A golden leaf falls to the ground.

Soon to rest. whereupon is drowned,
In a pool of foliage near;
It tumbles down with ne'er a sound.

So Autumn chills will sweep profound
And frantic winds at last appear;
A golden leaf falls to the ground
It tumbles down with ne'er a sound.

ASJ

The Four Letter Word

Select four letters in your mind
From out of six and twenty;
Half hail from a certain kind,
From consonants a plenty.
But the vowels (merely five)
You drop - except for two;
Only 'ee' and 'oh' survive
And chosen from the few.

The consonants (a score plus one)
Are difficult to pick
But 'el' and 'vee' will soldier on,
Yes! they will do the trick;
They're juxtaposed to style a word,
Familiar when translated,
The name, I think you've often heard,
Of a creature God created.

A modest word, a lucid fellow,
such a tiny soul;
An animal so softly mellow
The gentle little vole.
He roams around within his bounds
Causing no one harm;
'Mister Vole', then surely sounds
Beseeming of his charm.

But this expression can't be so...
As apt as God intended;
It's sequence, transformed long ago,
Which man has thus amended;
The word is bogus, all can tell,
And clearly God above...

Meant these characters to spell

L-O-V-E, love.

ASJ

The Equestrian

I encountered a gold palomino,
Gentle as gentle could be.
Fresh as a sprinkling of soft snow,
A lady of ladies was she.

*She shone like a flame in the sunlight,
Larger than life, as it were;
Almost unerring ~ but not quite,
I learned about horses from her.*

I rode a charcoal grey dapple

Standing some sixteen hands high;
If you fed him a rosy red apple
He'd rear up his fores to the sky.

*He stood like a prince in the daylight,
Tossing his head on a whim;
Almost majestic ~ but not quite,
I learned about horses from him.*

I once loved a bay gypsy vanner

As warm as the Maytime in spring
She had such an exquisite manner,
As sweet as the songbirds that sing.

*She shone like a flame in the sunlight,
Larger than life, as it were;
Almost unerring ~ but not quite,
I learned about horses from her.*

I dealt with a heavy blonde sorrel

He snorted and stomped all the time;
He always seemed up for a quarrel,
His temper was something sublime.

*A monster he could turn into,
A fearsome creature to see;
He'd tower above you
And push you and shove you.
He'd sneer and he'd rear,
Austere to appear.
He'd fight you and trick you
And bite you and kick you
So learn about horses from me.*

ASJ

The Enchanting Bluebell

Enchanting bluebells growing in the green wood.
Blossoming in the dawn of May,
Sprightly on a sweet spring day,
A reflection of all that is well and good.
The tinted hues drizzle all around,
Reticent, poignant, brightly crowned,
Sheltered by the treetops' hood.

Close by the place, where now they grow,
Hither is where the fairies hide;
Existing, dwelling there beside
The sparkling, dewy, dazzling show,
As the bells ring out far and near,
To summon them all when ere they hear,
And hence to a meeting place they go.

Yet if we should incidentally stray
Within a bluebells' circled wall,
And hear their peel begin to call,
We encounter the wrath of goblin gainsay,
Then such a sombre, austere thing,
Our sudden end would surely bring,
And the hex may take our days away.

Though beware the child on the woodland floor
In the blue hued copse close by.
The toxic plant may try,
To steal their souls as in impish lore.
The fairies know a pixie trick,
If this flower our children pick,
They will then be gone for evermore.

But this bloom is Saint George's ward;

So if a garland wreath you make,
With each flower that you take,
He defends your honour with his sword.
And with this necklace pendant spell,
In all the solemn things you tell,
The forthright truth you must accord.

And now the petals disappear ~ every one;
We've reached mid~June,
And very soon,
Sepals perish and there remain none;
Yet now at last,
The danger's past,
And the enchanting, glowing bluebell is gone.

ASJ

The Devil Comes Calling

Satan visits often.
He arrives at dead of night;
He counsels me
Where I should be
He exhorts with all his might.

Satan visits often,
I find him in the dark;
Tine figured head,
Eyes fiery red
A prong to make his mark.

Satan visits often,
Ghostly in his cloak;
My troth to break,
My soul to take,
My very faith to choke.

Satan visits often,
Expounding where I'm wrong;
He effects his say
Till break of day,
He attests where I belong.

Satan visits often,
Bearing bread and wine;
I may not know
Which way I'll go...
Mayhaps with him I'll dine.

ASJ

The Cooling Cloudburst

As lightening bright's the meadow
And thunder dulls the air;
I feel it still,
A stormy chill,
An aura everywhere.

I wander o'er the pathway
And paddle through the rain;
My bootheels quosh
The squelchy wash
Along the puddled lane.

My face refreshed with teardrops
The clouds have wept from high;
They gently wet
My eyes, and yet,
They barely seem to cry.

I dance on midst the moisture
The hail sends down to earth;
I sense the beat
Beneath my feet
And sing for all I'm worth.

But then the fulgid sunlight
Warms the land once more;
I'm home to you
As I step through
A rainbow's archwayed door.

ASJ

The Clown With No Name

There he stood with his painted face;
All focused on the bright colours that he wore.
No one saw his eyes (they were out of place),
Why should they? That's not what they had paid to see.
It was his jolliness that they chose to embrace.

His eyes, though, he could not over paint.
He could only shade round them in order to deceive ~
Nor gloss over them to conceal that troubled taint...
Eyes which contrasted 'gainst a huge red smiling mouth ~
Sad eyes... happy jocose smile... how quaint!

Children laugh, they think he's hilarious fun
(And so he is when you view him from their aspect).
Grown ups laugh too. when all is said and done;
They won't know what puzzles are under his hat...
'notalot' ~ if you'll pardon the pun.

I'm not funny, you see, such as is he;
He can recount a million gags by heart,
Ask anyone! if you don't agree ~ with me.
Where he stores them is anyone's guess ~
Maybe under the spreading chestnut tree?

He has no folks, he has no wife;
He doesn't even have a name of his own.
He has no fulfillment, only strife,
All that he possesses is his own reflection.
(He has no family.. has no wife.... he has no children.. has no life).

*Today it rained (he's not to blame)
Cats and dogs, so no one came.
He couldn't laugh ~ he tried and tried...*

So he, the clown, just cried and cried.

ASJ

The Bravest of the Brave

The bravest of the brave
Will rise to meet the foe
And fear not who they well may be
As marching on they go.
They stand before the fierce
And find the faith to put
Their trust in God, yet still they take
A bullet in the foot.

The bravest of the brave
Will rise and soldier on
And have no fear of danger
Till all their wars are gone.
They fight their bloody battle

Oblivious to harm,
They trust in God, yet still they take
A bullet in the arm.

The bravest of the brave
Will fear not where they tread
But in the end they're sure to take
A bullet in the head.
With all our brave men slaughtered,
Be that as it may,
The bravest of the very brave
Must rise to face the day.

ASJ

The Bane Of The Cancered Soul

There is no god in England
(I learned of that this day)
For when a man is stricken
He has no more to say.
He lies in expectation,
The end to shortly be,
His heart is blindly gazing out
Through eyes that barely see.

The blaze within his body
Radiates, and yet,
The chilling of his very soul
Allows him to forget.
With sonance all around him,
The sobbing and the tears,
He listens to so many words
Whereas he hardly hears.

And so within his restless mind
His hopes are all he'll keep;
All he'll find to comfort him
As those about him weep.
And in the darkness of the hour,
When all is done and said,
He sleeps the sleep that comes to pass
And rapes his weary head.

The Ballad of Sir Henry Shay

Sir 'enry Shay, the noble knight,
Bestride his charger Bess,
Chanced upon a sadly sight ~
A damsel in distress.

Despairing in the forest she
Vainly wept and sobbed;
Tethered to a chestnut tree
As she was being robbed.

Sir 'enry drew his tempered blade
And fought off robbers four.
Swashing, buckling, till he laid
Them hapless on the floor.

"My hero" then m'lady cried
"I'll marry you this day!
And be your wife, your faithful bride
To honour and obey".

But when she smiled, her eyes aglow,
He found she had no teeth;
Naught dwelt in the upper row
And not-a-one beneath.

Her nose was drawn and pointed,
A moustache grew within;
Her jowl had been disjointed
Round about her double chin.

Sir 'enry then bethought his lot
And sparked a canny plan.
Thinking of Sir Lancelot

Who shrewdly cut and ran.

The gallant knight would flee the glen
And beat a fleet retreat;
The better part of valour, then,
Was oh to be discreet.

Sir 'enry deemed he should be gone
Upon his trusty steed.
He coaxed a nudge that spurred her on
And galloped off at speed.

The moral of the story, where
Accordance looms a must,
When e'er you save a damsel fair
Pray leave her bound and trussed.

ASJ

The Acrostic Seasons

Autumn is the time of year
Uttering words of red and gold,
The boughs will soon be naked as can be.
Underneath the branches tier
Mounds of leaves heap in the cold,
Now that autumn falls upon the tree.

With the passing of the weeks
Inside the woodland haven there
Nothing stops the changing of the green.
The snowy landscape dusts the peaks,
Evergreens are white and fair,
Rending winter's icy season's scene.

Soon the sun will melt the snow
Producing springtime streams,
Rushing down the hillsides to the sea.
In and out of dales they go
Nurtured by sunbeams;
Going on forever fast and free.

So now the year has run it's course,
Under heaven's sky,
Melodious in song, a troubadour.
Mountains harness summer's force,
Elevated, towering, high,
Rehearsing for the summer's grande encore.

ASJ

Tannenbaum

Here I grow, a handsome fir tree
Standing upright within my wood;
An innocent, then let me be.

Where now I thrive for all to see,
Strobilus stemmed out of the bud;
Here I grow a handsome fir tree.

Today I prosper, living free,
As streaming sap spawns my lifeblood;
An innocent, then let me be.

Forever green and wild are we,
My friends and I'd age if we could;
Here I grow, a handsome fir tree.

The gentle breeze may hear my plea
And listen to me as it should;
An innocent, then let me be.

So man is come to sever me,
To rob me of my livelihood;
Here I grow, a handsome fir tree ~
An innocent, then let me be.

Take the Sunshine, Leave the Rain

If I could take my time again
A different thing I'd do;
I'd take the comfort, leave the pain.
Take the sunshine, leave the rain,
If only I could start anew.

If I could be another's son
A different path I'd choose;
I'd walk along, I wouldn't run,
I'd leave the sorrow, take the fun,
If only I could re-infuse.

If I could start another hour
A different way I'd go;
I'd take the sweetness, leave the sour,
Take the jolly, leave the dour,
If only I could make it so.

If I could live another day
I'd tread a different way;
I'd leave the turmoil, take the calm,
Leave the coarseness, take the charm,
If I could take my time again...
I'd take the sunshine, leave the rain.

ASJ

Sultan

The place was called the Tower Zoo
In Blackpool by the sea;
I went there with grandfather who
Showed animals to me.
I was but a boy then
Around about age nine,
The day would be my birthday when
He said the day was mine.

We strolled around the cages,
We looked at creatures grand;
We walked about for ages,
He held me by the hand.
And suddenly I saw him,
The saddest sight I'd seen
A dozing beast, forlorn and grim,
A king without a queen.

A sedated lion lying
Within a prison small;
I recall that I was crying,
I felt my teardrops fall.
Sultan was the lion's name,
His nameplate told me so;
I asked the keeper "What's your game?"
"He has no room to grow".

He rejoined "A full grown big cat!"
(He ought to be ashamed);
He told me that the cat was at
The zooland to be tamed.
I wondered what the hell it was
Coaxed punters pay to see,

I remember thinking this because
They should have set him free.

I gazed in awe at his great size
My soblets dripped like rain;
I heeded his half open eyes,
His regal tail and main.
I thought this day should, for me, be
The merriest I had had,
But it emerged to be, for me,
The saddest of sad ~ sad.

The king was drowsing, half asleep,
He couldn't hardly roar.
Nor raise a murmur ~ not a peep,
He couldn't even snore.
Although an infant I still knew
(These thoughts were in my head);
I still knew a thing or two ~
May be the better dead.

But now so many years have passed
I still detect a chill;
An image that will last and last...
I muse about him still.
Though he is lost to better things,
As noble as can be;
This mighty Sultan ~ king of kings
Will always be with me.

Satan\'s Riddle

As I was out, about, one day
I met the strangest man;
We talked of things, of wax and kings

As he, his tale began.

He said he was a carpenter
But looked so fine and grand,
Sporting walrus whiskers
And walking cane to hand.

He told me of his lifetime,
Five hundred years or more;
He said that I knew nothing,
I was wasted heretofore.

He said he'd speak a riddle
Before he'd by your leave,
I'd never glean the answer
Just so long as I may breath.

'tis round a dish as ever known
And white as snow the look of it;
There's food and life for all mankind
But no man e're partook of it.

If I should solve this enigma
I'd walk away scot-free;
If not the devil take my soul,
And steal away with me.

He laughed and said he had me,
That I was soundly beat;

And oh so soon I'd walk with him ~
The archfiend for to meet.

But he didn't know what made me grow
All those years by-go;
He figured wrong what made me strong
And made my lifeblood flow.

His laughing face would turn to stone
He'd see his ruse I'd bilk;
I answered his conundrum when
I explained that it's breast milk.

ASJ

Rye Whiskey, Rye Whiskey

Snug in the corner I saw the lad lie,
Fire in his belly and a cork in his eye;
Wordlessly sleeping, a-snooze in his bed,
His words, when awakened, go straight to your head.

Alluring to look at, golden is he,
There when you need him as sure as can be;
Anxious to aid you, he doesn't think twice,
For the cost of his concert your soul is the price.

Then tell him to go now, bid him goodbye;
Allow him to slumber, let sleeping dogs lie!
Tell him his concord you are shooing away,
The lad with the nostrum may no longer stay.

Time he was leaving, show him the door!
A flagon of whiskey a-smash on the floor.

ASJ

Rose of Paper (A Sonnet)

You are alike to a fine paper rose
Perfectly crafted, scarlet and snow white.
Within your eyes the paper rosebud grows
Sanguine and bright, the most beautiful sight.

A petal of white ~ a petal of red
Blend into pink as they shamelessly blush.
Colours of you, how they go to my head,
Remind me of summer, sun kissed and lush.

My paper rose crinkles, held in my palm;
So softly, gently the sound greets my ears.
Retarding my heartbeat ~ tranquilly calm,
As soft as raindrops ~ god's heavenly tears.

Flower of nature must die heretofore
Flower of paper may live evermore.

ASJ

Rex Iudaeorum

Have you seen the Nazarene?
Did you sup his wine?
Did you break
His bread and take
Sustenance divine?

Have you seen the healer?
Did he cure your ill?
Did he touch
Your forehead much?
Did he warm the chill?

Have you seen the teacher?
Did you hear his voice?
Did he say
Warm words and pray
And did your heart rejoice?

Have you seen the saviour?
Did he save your soul?
Did he give
You will to live?
Did he, you, enthrall?

Have you seen the Nazarene?
Have you wept and cried?
When you found
The grassy mound
Where he was crucified?

ASJ

Reflections of Grandad

If grandad really loved me...
(He told me so, he said)
He recited scary stories
As I lay in my bed.

He lit the fire that made me warm
And kept it burning bright,
It gave me cheer throughout the day
And comfort through the night.

He shared with me my weekend tea,
We two a jolly team;
Pouring out the ginger beer
And serving cakes and cream.

He helped me with my schoolery
And showed me what to do
He taught me how to spell my name
And keep my diary too.

But grandad never told me,
So I could ne'er perceive;
If grandad really loved me
Why, then, did he leave?

ASJ

Quo vadis et ego rogabo

THE POET'S TALE

Early one Sunday morning, 4th. July 1976, I was walking, alone, along a road near Zonnebeke, West Flanders, Belgium, when I encountered

an English clergyman. When we spoke he said to me "Quo Vadis" - so demonstrating his knowledge of Latin.

" I'm bound for Tyne Cot Cemetery" I told him. He seemed surprised that I understood his question.

He explained to me that he had just visited the cemetery himself and, for a while, we exchanged views on the horror of the First World War.

He then asked me if I had anyone at Tyne Cot. I replied to him "Yes - all of them".

ASJ, July 4th. 2016

This poem is dedicated to 75580 Pte. Frank Stanley Jeeves (1894-1961), Tank Corps (Machine Gun Corps),

who survived the 1914-18 conflict, and also to his 5.5 million comrades who, alas, did not.

Quo Vadis ask I
Upon this sabbath day;
To Hell, you reply,
Won't you show me the way.
Walk with me a while

And my tale I will tell,
It's many a long mile
But a path I know well.

You're a soldier, I note,

From your bullet holes,
Though you don't have the vote
You have killed many souls;
So young, you may be,
I assent this is true -
I'm a general, you see,
I've killed more than you.

I'll kill men I know
Ere this grim day ends;
I'll vanquish the foe,
Sacrificing my friends.
I'll demand *Who goes there*,
As I shy from a bomb,

I'll make war from my chair
This black day on the Somme.

I'll send you to fight
(As bold as I am)
I'll send you, all right,
I'll not give a damn.
I'll command you to shoot
As you storm through the mud...
I won't give a hoot,
I just won't see the blood.

I'll dispatch you to kill,
You'll go over the top;
I'll send you at will
Because I'll never stop.
I'll commit you to strive,
As you charge through the rain;
If you come back alive
Then I'll send you again.

Now your own end is nigh -
Your last moments on earth.
Your cross I'll supply
As that's all you are worth.
So heed my words well
When I pledge you this oath...
I'll greet you in hell
For there's room for us both.

ASJ

Quam tempus fugit

Watch it haste and watch it fly,
Why try espy it flashing by?
Now you see it, now you don't,
Then you heard it ~ now you wont.

First it's here and hence it's gone,
It's much the same for everyone.
Like a cloud high in the air...
Glance once more and it's not there.

Like a bubble drifting past,
though you know it cannot last.
A tranquil breeze, the bubble stops ~
Attempt to touch! the bubble pops.

Where it stems from no one knows;
No one sees to where it goes.
You know it's there but you can't find...
As not a trace it leaves behind.

Man can't beat this mighty force,
To try and try he'll fail, of course;
He'll never grasp the where's and why's
Quam tempus fugit ~ how time flies.

ASJ

Pater

I had so much to tell you
A while ago away;
And, although our tidings few,
There seemed so much to say.
When you were old ~ whilst I was young,
I might have listened when
A weave of words, together strung,
Were tendered now and then.

But note! the hour has wandered late
And dulls the muse of mind;
Time and tide, for no man wait ~
Ago remains behind.
So words unspoken, not to know,
Are words that time forgot,
They mattered to me then, ago,
But now they matter not.

ASJ

Paper Pirates (A Sonnet)

A fold-paper ship of such handsome build
Floating along in a calm rippling stream;
Delights a young boy, enchanted and thrilled,
Hypnotized by the water, clear, a gleam.

Pirates and shipmates imagined on board,
Seven Seas sailors all hearty and brave.
Treasure and riches, a wonderful hoard,
Set sail for an isle ~ and some secret cave.

Singing the songs to the tune of the pipe
Deep throated voices from black bearded lips.
Rousing sea shanties of many-a-type,
Tales of deeds done on watery trips.

But now a wild current swells in the weir...
His heros and daydreams all disappear.

ASJ

Never Mind The Weather

The coldest, forceful wind may blow;
The sun may, sometimes, golden glow;
The rain may, often, showery show;
The sky may dust the land with snow.

When it blows my hat is tied;
In the heat, 'neath shade I hide;
I shy from rain until it's dried;
As it snows I stay inside.

I don't mind a raucous gale
Or the sunburn in the vale
Nor the damp as raindrops sail
I love the biting snowflake hail.

A gust may roar throughout the night
But by the day the sun may bright;
A storm may rage with all its might ~
The winter snowfall, purest white.

So come what may my senses see
All that nature gifts to me.
Fair or foul, wild and free,
That's the way it's meant to be.

Nature's Exalted Echo

Ambling through a woodland glade
As silent as repose;
When night-time phantoms start to fade
A cautious zephyr blows;
Wild things dwelling in the dale
Serenely start to wake;
All around within the vale
The dawn begins to break.

The morning comes to all who wait
It's certain to appear;
The otter whistles to his mate
As she is dabbling near;
Nature's voices fill the air,
Sounds of every kind...
Come and go from everywhere
As dayspring bays unwind.

But if you trespass into here
Nigh this time of day...
You will hear it, crystal clear,
Not so far away.
The breeze will resonate and ring
Resounding, so sublime.
Reverberating tones that sing,
It happens every time.

To witness this recital now
Played out by nature's good;
To listen and to notice how
It rebounds through the wood;
Take note! take note! remember
This echo as it strays;

And pray this late September
Will be with you all your days.

ASJ

My Own Thanksgiving

Some people give thanks for potatoes
They eat them day upon day;
They grow them and buy them,
They skin them and fry them,
They, being a potato gourmet.

Some people give thanks for ripe apples
As red as a morning sunrise;
They bake them and stew them,
Or bite them and chew them,
They even put them into pies.

Some people give thanks for the chickens
Cackling and clucking about;
A food store on legs,
Producing fine eggs,
Worth every penny shelled out.

Some people give thanks for their friendship
To know a good friend is sublime;
Deference to make,
To give and to take,
Someone to respect all the time.

But I give thanks for my eyesight.
For my heart, I also revere;
You're one to look up to,
I see you and love you,
So I offer my thanks that you're here.

ASJ

My Friend and I

My friend and I conversed,
Just as the morning burst,
We parleyed over things that we hold dear;
We talked of how it was
When we were young because...
We talk, a lot, of things of yesteryear.

My friend and I talk on
Of former days, now gone,
We tell each other stories from afore;
We talk of days passed by
As we reminisce ~ or try,
To relive all the times we had, once more.

My friend and I evoke
Old memories of the folk
Who coloured both our lived from time to time;
We smile as we recall,
As each other we enthrall
With tales of deeds encountered in our prime.

My friend and I remember
Things ~ now a burning ember ~
Some further friends, sadly now expired;
Though we often call to mind
The others left behind
Who, like us, are gratefully retired.

My friend and I sit hushed
As private thoughts are pushed
To the vanguard of our memory by and by;
So we'll enjoy our treasured hours
As we build our 'ivory towers'

And chuckle to ourselves ~ my friend and I.

ASJ

My First Ride

Well I recall, when I was young,
(Much younger than I am today).
My life, thus far, remained unsung...
When all I did was sleep and play.
I saw a horse, afore me stood,
Coat of chestnut, mane of black,
Most dazzling sight of my childhood
With lustrous saddle and shining tack.

Slender legs, firm and strong
Carrying his great body, lean;
Flowing tail so bristly long,
The very finest ever seen.
Bought for me that summer morning
Through my parents grace;
My like for horses then aborning...
A lifelong fondness to embrace.

I looked way up to see this sight
Towering high above my head.
Standing gracefully aright...
A proudly handsome thoroughbred.
Dare I mount him, dare I ride?
Would he take to me?
Could I seat myself astride?
Or would he firmly disagree?

I plucked up all my infant daring
Placing my left foot ~
In the stirrup he was wearing...
An ever so tiny shoe I put.
I climbed into the leather saddle
(Assisted by my dad)

I placed my minute legs astraddle...
And rocked and rocked and rocked like mad.

ASJ

Moorland Solitude

The spongy earth springs underfoot
Concealing all below;
You mind your way,
This eerie day,
You're careful how you go.

As mists roll off a craggy moss
Concealing all above;
You find your way,
This eerie day,
About the place you love.

A speck of rain anoints your head
Concealing thoughts inside;
You see your way,
This eerie day,
Where a quaggy snare awaits.

The day is cool, the wind is sharp
Concealing mortal sound;
You hear your way,
This eerie day,
Ear firmly to the ground.

Envisage ghosts of people past
Concealing souls, admired;
You wend your way,
this eerie day,
Where Bronte's were inspired.

But you are where you need to be
Concealing troth secure;
You hide away. This eerie day,

In the solace of the moor.

ASJ

Midnight Inside My Head

The hour boldly strikes midnight inside my head.
I have already endured the long and thoughtful day.
I'm courting precious ambitions of sleep and bed
But there remain, still, things for me to do...
So many untitled pages remain unread, unsaid.

It's night-time within and so very dark
I wonder if I'm truly able to see.
But inside my head I detect a forlorn spark
Distant, sure, but just bright enough ~
It's an uncertain voyage on which my ideations embark.

I see before me a further adventurous day looming,
Awaiting the daylight which is no longer here.
I think of my existence, my thoughts consuming
And devouring these ideas until it has nourished its fill.
Clouds of conceptions, or misconceptions, are forever pluming.

As I live and breath in order to stagger along
I stumble blindly through this darkness of mine.
I have grown weak now but my mind remains strong.
I am conscious of all the tasks I must perform
And place things in the order in which they belong.

I longingly look forward to the morning's golden thread.
Birds will sweetly sing and the sun will illuminate me.
All my words are now coloured over with blue and red.
But tomorrow a new day is born and I will remember them
Though, for now, ~ maybe forever ~ it's still midnight inside my head.

ASJ

Maying

Oh to be maying this cool sun-snapped day,
Temperately faultless and fair.
Oh to be roaming, this rare day in May ~
Oh how I wish you were there.

Oh to be with you as spring bids its bye
And as summer is saluted, yet still...
Oh you were with me as often I try
To think of you out on the hill.

I remember you with me, faithful and true,
Oh you, how loyal and sound;
Alert when I whistled and ever I knew
Oh you, a prince of a hound.

Oh to be maying as memories awaken ~
But do I feel rain in the sky?
Not so, this May day, I must be mistaken;
Oh 'tis the tear in my eye.

ASJ

Malignant Clouds

Clouds loom drifting, passing by,
The west wind gently tempts them on
Though no one knows what cause them cry
And no one hears their pleading voice
As all their acid tears well dry.

Snowy white, in rank and file,
The south wind warmly glides them on;
Smiling wryly all the while
Natant high above the earth
Ambling on, mile after mile.

Alluring to the offhand glancer
The east wind briskly chafes them on
Skittering like the showtime dancer
Yet hidden deep within their breast
A growing rude and covert cancer.

But nature's wrath will bid her toll
The north wind casts the clouds astray
Freezing, breezing, pole to pole,
The stricken, tainted, wisps will die ~
Dare no one care to save their soul?

So now as time is dwindling low
As the ill winds clime their worst
The poisoned rains, in flooding flow,
Rape our land to end mankind ~
And still, the winds shall wanton blow.

Maiden Fair

Fair maiden how I long to be
Out, this day, a-stroll with thee.
Maiden fair come take my hand,
Walk with me 'bout hallowed land.

Look at me, tell what you spy
As you look me in the eye.
Voice your kind words soft and low,
Gift your ethos as we go.

Fair maid embrace me with your soul,
Hear my quandary, pray console;
Help me in my hour of need
Now mine eyes begin to bleed.

Count my blessings one by one,
Steal my infractions, leave me none;
Lead me on like straying sheep,
Gaze on me my soul to keep.

Fair maiden guide me on my way,
Show your light at break of day.
Play your music in my ear,
Steer me safely lest I veer.

Cause me heed your ardent power,
Strengthen me this very hour.
Hold me upright as we walk
Reveal your secrets as we talk.

Fair maiden, maiden, all I ask
Recognise behind my mask.
Know the yearning that I long,

Keep me virtuous, keep me strong.

Sit with me in silent pose

Let me observe a fragrant rose.

Bloomed, ablaze neath noon day sun

Till my tangled web is spun.

Fair maiden listen at day's end,

Lay with me - a special friend.

Let your thoughts flit to and fro,

Kiss my face afore I go.

As darkness chills the evening air

Promise me, oh maiden fair;

Pledge that if we part anon....

That you will love me when I'm gone.

ASJ

Inside a Darkened Room

A darkened room knows no sorrow
No today and no tomorrow;
A darkened room has no sadness
Has no pain only madness.

A darkened room has no light
Has no moon or starlight bright;
A darkened room has no shine
Has no lustre, yours or mine.

A darkened room has no good
Has no heartbeat, has no blood;
A darkened room has no breath
Has no life but only death.

A darkened room has no style
Has no simper, has no smile;
A darkened room has no grin
Has no easiness within.

A darkened room has no day
No opinion, has no say;
A darkened room has no eve
Has no reason to believe.

A darkened room has no PC
Has no he or has no she;
A darkened room has no view
Has no me or has no you.

ASJ

In the Cool Night Air

The bisted day has fallen still,
A darkened mead hangs overhead;
The hush within the evening chill
Chants now the yore is gone to bed.
A gently breeze steals from the west,
Cool among the shadowed lanes;
The sunburned broil, now at rest,
It's warmth has gone, though still remains.

The cool night air stands all alone
Anon the past is gone to sleep;
Daytime secrets tossed and blown,
The faithful night for ere to keep.
Secrets that the breeze fears speak,
Winnowing in the night-time swell;
Brushing eastward 'gainst your cheek...
The whispered wind mayn't kiss-n'-tell.

Evensong is served this eve
All around the moonlit shrine;
Absolution cedes when you believe,
The cool night air is sweet as wine.
Drink your fill in solemn thought,
Let your mind escape within;
Cleanse your conscience, ever fraught,
Save your soul! - confess your sin!

Here beneath a cloudless sky
You're not alone ~ you seldom are;
Within the dim nocturnals fly
As someone watches from afar.
So meditate, your faith elate,
Ruminate, and yet beware;

Intoxicate your mindless state
Drinking in the cool night air.

ASJ

Ignis Fatuus ~ Fool's Fire (a sonnet)

Wayfaring alone in moorland's domain
Walking along with the dead of the night;
Trekking, safely, a well trodden pathway,
Suddenly spotting a beckoning light.

A warm and welcoming distant beacon,
A clear bright feature to guide me ahead;
I followed the pharos with cheery store
Allowing to let myself to be led.

But then, alas, I met jack-o'-lantern
Impishly, carelessly leading astray,
Steering my footway nearer a quagmire
Fogged in the haze of the mist on the way.

With mischief afoot, deception I see...
You will-o'-the wisp surely couldn't fool me.

ASJ

I Wish I Was the Wizard

I wish I was a tin man
Out there cutting wood;
I'd rely upon the lube can
To keep my elbows good.
All day I'd task and toil
Until it's time for tea,
And then I'd take a squirt of oil
To keep my knee joints free.

I'd dream about a girlfriend
My dreams then turn to dust;
I comprehend at daytime's end
I'm just a heap of rust.
I'd never find a maid of tin,
It's tearing me apart,
As when I search my soul, within,
I find I have no heart.

I wish I was a scarecrow
Out living in a lea.
But all the critters there, though,
Just jest and laugh at me.
I stand about with outspread arms
Scaring off the birds,
I'm seldom heard around the farms....
I'm always lost for words.

I dream about a girl of straw
Lithe enough to squeeze;
My dreams then turn to chaff, and so
They blow off in the breeze.
I'll never get a spouse of hay,
My dreams swill down the drain;

I wouldn't know just what to say
I haven't got a brain.

I wish I was a lion. brave,
Roaring mighty roars;
Seeing off my foes to save
The world from mighty wars.
I'd spend my time a-prowling,
Vaunting round with pride,
Snarling and a-growling....
But all I do is hide.

I wish I had a lioness
To hunt and ply for me;
But that will never be, I guess ~
I'm cowardly, you see!
I have no courage for to ask
A feline for a date;
I have no luck ~ I have no pluck
I'll never find a mate.

So I wish I was the wizard
To save me from the storm;
My life is such a blizzard,
But who will keep me warm?
I long to be a magic man
The future I'd foresee....
But then again a better plan,
I'd rather just be me.

ASJ

I Wept For Thee

I wept all day, my love has gone,
She went away and tarried none;
It teared my eyes as morning broke
With no goodbyes, she never spoke.

As the daylight lits the land
In the daybright here I stand
And all alone I wept for she
As on my own I think of thee.

Then as the day comes to its end
I think and pray my heart will mend.
But think, I should, why I cry for?
She's gone for good! I weep no more.

I Walk, This Day, This Haunted Land

I walk, this day, this haunted land
(Not far off, Mancunian city walls)
'neath my feet sprawls peaty sand ~
Overhead as evening falls,
The ghostly voice of childrens' calls.

This land, taciturn, calm and still,
A sombre place to garner thought;
A meditation of past ill ~
All the anguish time has brought ~
The mighty horrors, ever fraught.

Evoking days of deadly deeds,
Wicked sins of heretofore;
The ghostly voice of innocence pleads
You salute what happened, evermore,
Here in nineteen sixty four.

Infant souls, half concealed,
Ne'er forgotten over time;
Three were found below this field
Buried under peat and lime ~
Reposing 'midst the moorland grime.

He walks, this day, this haunted land
(Not far off, Mancunia's city near)
He romps with others hand in hand ~
But spare a thought and weep a tear
For a lonely boy who still lies here.

ASJ

I Ain't No Martin Sinatra

I'd love a smoking jacket
Quilted blue and gold;
A plush black velvet collar
Outstanding, rich and bold.
I'd wear it proudly every day
Like 'fifties' movie pics,
I'd wear it all the while, as like
Sinatra in the flicks.

I'd love a glass of bourbon
Like Dino in his songs;
I'd always have it next to me
Right there where it belongs.
I'd often take a sip from it
To help me slur my speech;
I'd keep it, always, close to hand ~
Seldom out of reach.

I'd love thereon my outfit
(Upon the jacket breast)
To bear my name's initial
Embroidered on my chest.
Then I could do it my way,
That old wine drinker me ~
My jacket and my tumbler glass
For all my friends to see.

I'd love my smoking jacket,
A cigarette in hand;
Lookin' rather oh so cool
Ah yes! I have it planned.
But now that I remind myself ~

As I pause and think,
I may not enjoy either as
I neither smoke nor drink.

ASJ

His Coat of Many Colours

His coat has many colours,
Joseph is his name;
Although some call him 'Joey'
It's Joseph just the same.

The collar on his cloak
Is such a vibrant red;
From his shoulders to his pointy chin
It goes right to his head.

The nether of this robe
Has hues of greens and blues
From his chubby rounded waist
To his rugged grey-black shoes.

His sleeves are speckled yellow,
A dazzling golden shade;
And silver sprays within the fold ~
Delightful how they're made.

Bright scarlet and vermilion
Make threads of coloured joy;
For Joey is a parrot
And 'e's a pretty boy

ASJ

Heidi and Snoop

*A yawn, a stretch, a wake-up
A blink of drowsy eyes.
A sniff, a scratch, a shake-up
It's almost time to rise.
A look around the break of day
Is it rain or shine?
It doesn't matter anyway
When you're a shrewd canine.*

*Off they set at early morn'
Adventuring about
Here and there a day is born
(Snoop! I hear you shout)
Snoop do this and Snoop do that
(Sit! Snoop you explain)
And then it's up from where he's sat
And off they go again.*

*Round about the fields and ways
Weaving to and fro
Snoop the canine runs and plays
And puts on quite a show.
As Heidi walks a piece behind
And lets him bound ahead
Snoop the canine soon will find
He's ready for his bed.*

*So he and she are home at last
And Heidi takes a seat
Snoop the canine, fading fast,
Is lying at her feet.
A yawn a stretch a scratch of ear
Collapsing in a heap ~*

*Now the hour is drawing near
For Snoop to go to sleep.*

ASJ

Gold Autumn Leaves

No longer the leaves show their full summer green,
As this cool Autumn day
Takes their own youth away
As it once did with me a long time ago...
As forty short years have now seen
(But are the leaves still beautiful?)

Green changes to gold, as now it must,
Though more subtle to see
(Fluttering down from a tree)
As it is with myself, as I well know,
Soon we will both (the leaves and I) turn to dust
(But are the leaves still beautiful?)

Resplendant leaves no longer steep in the sun;
As I walk down life's lane
With the wind and the rain
I see myself, see what I have come to be.
I see my own autumn has begun
(But are the leaves still beautiful?)

Wrinkled, and as delicate and brittle
As the twigg and the nut,
As they snap underfoot,
They became so downtrodden
And are now applauded little
(But are the leaves still beautiful?)

Then suddenly appears a seasonal breeze;
It blows all around
Swirling there on the ground
And the frail, weak leaves are parted...
Stolen from their home in the trees

(But are the leaves still beautiful?)

And as darkness falls o'er the wooded scar

The time is now nigh

For the leaves to blow by...

To yield to a greater influence than I

(But are the leaves still beautiful?)

Yes they are!

ASJ

God Save the Planet

A person who was fourteen years
Lectured me today;
Said our planet's ruined
by things we throw away.
Said my generation
Caused this mess of now,
Said we're not fit to live here,
It's all our fault somehow.

But in my day our milk was brought

In bottles made of glass;
When they were done we washed them
And sent them back en masse.
No plastic cartons did we use,
No carbon footprint tread;
No trace of masse pollution,
No tears of acid shed.

There was no cheap McSomeone!
There was no burger thing;
There was no polystyrene tray,
Your take away to bring.
Our chips were wrapped in newsprint
Which rotted in the ground
Leaving our environment
Fairly safe and sound.

We went to buy our sweeties
In a paper cone;
We got a measured quarter,
No plastic seeds were sown.
We bought a quart of lemonade

Bottled with a cap,
Then sixpence for the empty
From our shopkeeper chap.

We didn't have the money
To fly off in the sun.
We took our yearly holiday
In Britain, for our fun.
No CO2 from aircraft
To poison all our air,
We had to go by bus or car
Or train to take us there.

So thank you for your sound advise,
You learned it all at school;
For telling me where I went wrong
Your right! I'm such a fool.
You pointed out all my mistakes
And now I lately see
All I did to mother earth....
You're telling me!

ASJ

God Be With You

*The earth is hushed, a silent chill
Serene and blushed ~ calm and still.
When nought is heard and nought is said,
No more wars for we're all dead.*

I'll fight you in the morning

At Hastings by the sea;
I'll fight you without warning,
May my god be with me.
I'll battle here at battle,
By hell! I'll take you on,
You'll hear my sabre rattle
And witness my foes gone.

I'll fight you here at Waterloo
For I have cannons now;
I'll take all comers, two by two,
My god is near, I vow.
This battlefield is not my home
Though I'll seize it just the same;
I'll exercise my right to roam
And play the combat game.

I'll fight you here in Flanders' fields
I've sworn a deadly oath;
I'll fight you where the poppies grow,
My god created both.
I'll chase you back where you belong
And kill some on the way;
I'll do it, be it right or wrong,
I'll prevail this bloody day.

I'll fight you here above the trees
As I have learned to fly;
I'll bring my rival to his knees,
You'll see! my god and I.
I'll smother you in fire and flame,
I'll bomb you from the air;
I'll ravage you, it's all the same,
My god and I don't care.

I'll fight you here in paradise,
You're sure to get here soon;
Crusading where it's twice as nice,
I'll dance my battle tune.
I'll blitz you till you turn to sand
And ebb you with the tide;
And I will sit at his right hand,
For God is on my side.

ASJ

Genevieve Is A Summer's Day

She is the sunlit start of day
Bright, as brightness strikes its way;
Fresh within the fall of dew
As the next day starts anew.

*The waking sun is yawning
Conceiving one more dawning
Genevieve is the morning.*

She is the warmth of noonday sun

As the dayspring web is spun;
Sprinkling sparkling, lucent light
Refulgent there at foreday's height.

*A petaled sweet bouquet,
A roseate bathed display
Genevieve is the new day.*

She is the mystery of the eve

As, slowly, daytime takes its leave;
A portrait of the deepest night,
A graceful bluebird poised in flight.

*As shadowed shades ascend
And in the darkness blend
Genevieve is the journey's end.*

ASJ

Flight Of Might

Fly you high, a graceful bird
We speak about you yet;
Soaring o'er the clouded blue
Lest we should forget.
You dive and swoop then rise again
Adroit in every way
A drifting gliding sight to see
Though still a bird of prey.

Tail upright and wings aspread
As through the clouds you dip
Winging o'er the air waves
Fleet from tip to tip.
Your beating, faithful, merlin heart
Performs her loyal chore,
Driving, powering on and on
Amid the mighty roar.

So here's to you fair Spitfire
And Mitchell here's to you.
And raise a glass to cheer them
And here's to you the few.
Then turn and fly off windward
And end your airborne show;
And leave in blazing glory
But wave before you go.

Daunted Day Musings

In every life some rain must fall,
Though wherefrom heaven knows.
With passing years the storm may call,
The tempest comes and goes.
The day could see a cloudburst hail
To soak you through and through,
Yet silver raindrops deftly fail
To bathe away the blue.

As thunder quakes the path of life,
Like cannons in the sky.
And lightning, cutting like a knife,
An electric charge on high.
When icy drops sleet all about
And crisis canters near
Then windy blows that scream and shout
Bombard the soul with fear.

So now I'm old, though seldom sad,
I think of days long gone.
I smile about the good and bad
And savour every one.
Although the darkened clouds may drift
And bluster out their rains
I still salute a special gift ~
The sunshine here remains.

Come Soon Fair, Mild, and Early Spring

The oak and rowan slumber still
Reposing in their frosted bed;
Holding off the shivered chill
Dormant, docile, all but dead.
Skeletons drab against the blue
Leafless limbs up-reaching high,
Clothed in sleeves of frozen dew
Below them hidden secrets lie.

On the ground the snowdrops burst
Early risers of the year
Contending to be blooming first
A fleetly winter's end in near.
Premature, the sunlight's rays
Icy stalactites eroding,
Tumbling down a spectral haze
With leafy new born buds exploding.

A feathered bird throng fills the skies
With warbled wonder aforeside;
Showing up in sweet surprise
Stepping out before it's prime.
And now the season, bright and bold,,
Marches on afresh and new
Driving out the drizzled cold
As spring has sprung before her due.

ASJ

Carpe diem

And so the day in earnest comes,
She slowly starts to grow.
Then the daylight blush appears
And gently starts to show.
Just as the songbirds first awake
To serenade the air...
Digest the moment, listen well
Their voice spills everywhere.

As strands of brilliant light are born
To saturate the ground;
Creatures of the daytime stir
And deftly move around;
Watch them roused (unbeknownst to them)
And see them frisk and quest,
Remember soundly all you see...
Creation at its best.

When flowery blooms have made their debut
Here on nature's stage.
Their heads have lifted from their sleep
To pay you their homage.
Perfumed petals blazing brightly
Giving all they've got,
Note their beauty, air and grace
And so forget them not.

The mighty army ~ ancient oaks ~
Protect from rain and sun;
Stout and towering overhead
Their defence has now begun.
They creak and groan against the wind

Bending in the breeze...
Retain this aspect in your mind,
The visage of the trees.

In the sunshine you may walk
Beside the one you care for;
(Or talk and listen in the rain)
Embrace this time and therefore...
Applaud this day with all you heart
As daytime glow is cast;
Seize the day ~ *carpe diem* ~
This day may be your last.

ASJ

By The Still Water's Edge

I gazed down from the water's side
To see a silver gleam
And standing staring looked and tried
To see beyond the stream.
The clearest water sparkling, pure,
Below me stilled and calm;
Its cooling, soothing, fooling lure,
Seductive in its charm.

I saw a young man peering on
With eyes that conquered all.
But in a moment he was gone ~
Uncanny, I recall.
Beneath the surface he was there,
A soul of twenty four,
Then vanished in the swell somewhere
And left me by the shore.

Again he came when it was staid
And braved another glance.
Had I his acquaintance made

Long by-go by chance?
He spoke and told me in a rhyme
He yearned that he was me;
Though musing swept me back in time ~
I longed that I was he.

ASJ

Billow Tide, Ebb Tide

Herculean waves pound the frail sea shore
Smashing, crashing against a rock-bound bight.
Seagull songs drown in a fierce deafing roar;
Thunderous vast swells of wondrous height.
Towering and exploding overhead,
Mercilessly and ruthlessly, cruel
Then collapsing randomly, gone, dispread.
Retreating homeward to Neptune's great pool.

But then the reposing, saline ebb tide
(Its tempestuous fury now set aside)
Abdicates silently, bereft of word;
Leaving the bounty the wild ocean yields;
Discarded are jumbly flotsam filled fields ~
And a seagull chorus can, bis, be heard.

ASJ

Beyond The Rain

Where have all the raindrops gone
Spilling from on high?
Which once would fall about my head
But now my head is dry.
Where have all the snowflakes gone
Ambling down from space?
Shivering in the winter wild
And melting on my face.

Where have all the rivers gone
Dashing to and fro?
They once would splash across the land
As seaward they would go.
Where have all the oceans gone
To crash against the shore?
All that's left is salted sand
Upon a seabed floor.

Where have all the rainbows gone?
They lighted up the sky.
They once would bow and bend and reach
So far could see the eye.
Where have all the sundrops gone
To energise the rain?
Absent now, without a trace,
And never seen again.

And where have all my brothers gone?
Each walked the earth with me;
O'er moor and mountain, day by day,
From clifftop to the sea.
And where have all my sisters gone,
And all the loves I've known?

Disappeared, just like the rain,
So now I'm left alone.

ASJ

Bert the Blacksmith

Bert the blacksmith tends his coals
In hobnail boots with leather soles;
Oxhide apron draped around
This portly figure, forearms browned.

Red in face with hair of grey,
Shaping iron assigns his day;
Hammering, striking his way through,
Beating metal straight and true.

Bert the blacksmith mops his brow
His body starts to swelter now;
Perspiration flowing free,
Reminds him of his mug of tea.

He pops his kettle on his fire
Scalding water to acquire;
Soon the whistle shrills its blow
Upon a crimson hearth aglow.

Bert the blacksmith takes a rest
He swabs the ashes off his chest;
On a cask he sits at ease
Dining on his bread and cheese.

He sups his brew and toils again
His hefty anvil takes the strain;
Forming horseshoes round the bick
Punching nail holes good and quick.

Bert the blacksmith shoe's a bay,
A mighty shire that draws a dray;
Taking care with every nail

So she may haul her cart of ale.

The drayman pays a crisp ten bob
As Bert has done a sterling job;
The drayman thanks him for his willing,
Bids farewell and tips a shilling.

Bert the blacksmith's forge dies down,
Dusk is settling on the town;
Reflecting on the night ahead...
Bert is thinking of his bed.

A voice is calling from the house
He pays attention to his spouse;
"Albert, dear, your supper's due"...
Bert the blacksmith's day is through.

ASJ

Be My Compass

I am reckless, you are wise
I am feckless, you advise ~
Tell me all you will...
Show me all your skill.

I am foolish, you are gifted
I am mulish, you're unscripted ~
Tell me where I'm wrong...
Show me I belong.

I am worthless, you are rich
I am mirthless, you bewitch ~
Tell me all you know...
Show me where to go.

I'm pragmatic, you are wary
I am static, you can vary ~
Tell me your mind...
Show me your kind.

I am plain, you are sculptured
I'm arcane, you are cultured ~
Tell me of your faith...
Show me your wraith.

I'm astray, you are found
I'm midway, you're profound
So tell me what to say...
Show me the way.

ASJ

Around the Horn

Take a drink o' grog boys
Your home is far away;
Midst the gales and stormy noise
Close your eyes and pray.
Pray god not desert your soul
And leave you here forlorn;
His time has come to test you all
You're 'bout to round the horn.

The shivering timbers creaking,
The straining oak beams creep;
This devil's day is seeking
To claim you for the deep.
The stinging rain bombards you
With all its mightful force,
The fiendish wind attempting to
Divert you from your course.

The lookout in the crow's nest,
The Flying Dutchman spies;
A hundred yards or more at best,
Right there before his eyes.
A ghost ship with its fated crew
Never making shore;
Dancing in and out of view...
Adrift for evermore.

Your weary eyes are half ajar,
Overcome with sleep;
Slumber overdue, by far,
Your vigil watch you keep.
But close your eyes and you are cast
Crashing to the waves

Joining shipmates from the past
Therein their sea-deep graves.

The helmsman ~ now the pilot ~

Travails to navigate;
Averting every islet
Or hazard in the strait.
Holding firm the route he plans
Maintains an even keel,
Clenching both his naked hands

Frozen to the wheel.

And now Pacific waters lie
Half a world to rear;
Atlantic breakers sailors spy,
And cheer a hearty cheer.
A golden earring you may choose,
Your left lobe to be worn;
You hauled you weight and paid your dues...
The rounding of The Horn.

ASJ

Alpine Melody

Up on high, an Alpine pasture,
Golden with the sun;
A herd of cattle grazing there
Enjoy the morning fun.
Some chewing and some mooing
And rolling in the grass;
Some to-ing, fro-ing, dancing,
Close by the mountain pass.

Higher up the peaks are snowed
But here it's yellow bright,
Sundrops showering on the land
Contrasting with the white.
The greenness of the fertile fields
Providing bovine lunch,
The goodness in the grasslands
Sustains the happy bunch.

And if you move amongst them,
'bout this time of day
Your eyes will see the band, full well,
Your ears will hear them play.
These maestros of the cowbell
worn around the neck
Resounding in the gentle breeze,
Swaying as they trek.

They play their tune, so merry,
A melody to share;
An echo in the valley
Invades the yodeled air.
So play away the cowbell
For everyone to hear;

Play them here and there, and then,
Play them far and near.

ASJ

Afore The Cockerel Crows

Who is this muse afore me stood?
I know her not, I say.
A temperate stirring of the blood,
I bid her go away.
Her seducing, warm, pacific smile,
The shining in her eye;
I watch her handsome form a while
Afore her I deny.

I look, once more, a further glance
Affirming what I thought.
A glowing, flowing, countenance
Upon mine eyes here brought.
I bid her go, a second time,
Yet, still, she must remain
Sparkling in the morning rime
Be gone, I say, again.

I close my eyes and hope to see
Her off before I wake.
An angel come to beckon me
And for my soul to take.
My eyes are opened, looking on,
Aroused from my repose ~
I'd surely bid her thrice begone
Afore the cockerel crows.

ASJ

A Winter's Trill

Sing me a song to help me along,
Pay me a visit on this chilly day;
Warble your words profoundly and strong
I will listen intently to all that you say.

Play me a tune, just before noon,
Whistle a melody heartfelt and sweet;
Make yourself heard, quaver and croon,
Sing your cantata entire and complete.

Call to your mate o'er there by the gate,
Carry your voice through the crisp brumal frost;
Perform your duet afore it's too late....
Before the daylight is forfeit and lost.

Chirp a refrain and thrill me again
In a way only robins can tranquilly do;
Hop from your branch and dance in the rain
Trill me a winterly chorus or two.

Sing your song bright as you take off in flight,
Allow, now, your voice fill the cool dusky skies;
Flit away home as the day turns to night
But come back again, next day, at sun rise.

ASJ

A Tale of Saint Nicholas

When I was but a baby
My parents told a tale;
I listened, and just maybe,
There was a holy grail.
They said as I was sleeping
Upon a Christmas eve,
A gentleman came creeping
To children who believe.

When I was but a mite
My uncle said it's so,
When you close your eyes tonight
To a magic place you'll go.
He said there would be treasures,
Riches to behold;
Toys and other pleasures
If you're as good as gold.

When I was but a child
My auntie promised me...
To let your dreams, my lad, run wild
A rainbow you will see.
But when I became older,
Asking how's and why's
My world appeared much colder...
I found that they were lies.

There was no guy named Santa
Flying with the stars;
It was just fabled banter,
There was no man from Mars.
Adult imagination

With myth and lore entwine:
Of fanciful creation ~
Ideas of theirs not mine.

Though now I'm old and tinted grey
And all my elders gone;
I often plainly have to say
I miss them one by one.
I think about their stories ~
Resurrecting them anew;
I see those former glories...
After all were really true.

ASJ

A Lament for Futurity

I wept for trees and forests,
We laid them all to waste;
Will children have no air to breath,
No atmosphere to taste?

I wept for mighty oceans
We trashed them to the brim.
Will children of the life therein
Protract no place to swim?

I wept for northern icelands,
A thawing polar crown.
Will children of the Inuit
Become condemned to drown?

I wept for fields and meadows,
Poisoned long ago.
Will children of the landscape
Reap no seeds to sow?

I wept for men's futurity
Ere I took my sleep.
Will children of the morrow
Beget no tears to weep?

ASJ

A Day Out in London Town

Cor blimey it's London! ~ a wet winter's day,
The stream in the gutter swills fancies away.
The 'eavens 'ave opened, the wind 'n' the rain,
All of your credence is washed down the drain.

A walk by the river that rolls along still;
You turn up your collar to turn out the chill.
Old Father Thames is right showin' 'is age
Beside slushy pavin' along the Bird Cage.

The electric of neon, flashin' aglow,
Lights up the shadows and lights up Soho.
A sidestep down Dean Street where philosophers roam
Passin' the lodgin' ~ once Karl Marx's 'ome

Street vendors are weathered, soaked to the skin,
Though 'ot chestnut sellers are sizzlin' within;
And corners and alleys where umbrae of bright
Drape faces of 'arlots, the girls of the night.

Along past the Palace, the digs of our Queen,
She's doin' quite nice, if you knows what I mean?
No time to visit 'er, no time to call,
Gawd bless 'er Majesty; Gawd bless us all.

So it's back 'ome at nightfall, the place where I sleep;
My bed is sufficient to make Jesus weep.
By the sacrosanct soup kitchen down by the docks...
Just up the road from me owd cardboard box.

A Daring Game of High Toby

A DARING GAME OF HIGH TOBY (the enchantment of the west country highwayman)

Where ere a junction of the ways,
Where merge a group of lanes;
A lonely soul, this game he plays,
To seek ill gotten gains.

His handguns idling at his side
He'll avail them by and by;
Nestling 'neath his cloak to hide
And keep his powder dry.

He contemplates his daunting task,
A coach is almost due;
He discretely now amends his mask
To conceal his face from view.

His mount is growing restless she,
Not caring for to stand;
He checks her with the reins to see
Her steady in his hand.

He gulps a quaff of brandy,
He's set to spring his trap;
Bedecked as like a dandy,
A feather in his cap.

He halts a coach and bears his arms
He cries "Stand and deliver!"
The gentlemen hold up their palms,
The ladies stand and shiver.

He brings his flintlocks to the aim
And cocks each loaded pistol;
High toby is his daring game
Upon the road to Bristol.

He passes round his feathered hat
And treats them all like fools;
He takes his pick of this and that
And steals their gold and jewels.

As evening falls he takes his pleasure
In a tavern in the town;
Counting out his plundered treasure,
Swilling stout ale down.

But soon the law takes up with him
And remands him in his cell;
Standing trial, his chances slim,
He knows he's bound for hell.

The judge, no mercy does he show,
Peering o'er his brow;
Sentencing the bold outlaw....
So who is foolish now?

Though if you venture out this day
Then here's a scene you'll see;
A highwayman along the way....
Hanging from a tree.

ASJ

A Blacksmith's Boy (a ballad)

One sunny springtime morning
I met her on a fair day.
I saw her from a distance
Out strolling on the fairway.

*As like the springtime morning
She filled the air with joy...
She was a rose of England
And I a blacksmith's boy.*

I heard that she was singing

As I maundered ever near;
The sweetest charming plainsong
Sent softly to my ear.

*As like the springtime morning
She filled the air with joy...
She was a rose of England
And I a blacksmith's boy*

She had the rarest countenance,
She had the fairest flowing hair;

She looked the grandest lady,
Ethereal beyond compare.

*As like the springtime morning
She filled the air with joy...
She was a rose of England
And I a blacksmith's boy.*

She was a rose of this fair land,

The flower of Saint George,
But I my master's vassal,
A servant of the forge.

*So like the springtime morning
She filled my heart with joy...
She, a rose of England
Whilst I a blacksmith's boy.*

ASJ

A Kingfisher Day

**When the morning first is born
With darkness on the run.
Warmth and light then greet the morn'
And make the way for sun.**

**When night-time creatures take their bed
And daytime things appear;
That's the time, I've often said,
When heaven is most near.**

**To stand and view the coloured show
With flowers of each kind;
The vivid hues of petals glow,
They intoxicate the mind.**

**To walk amongst the dewy grass
Which sparkles in the light.
Their blades salute you as you pass
And chase away the night.**

**To look above and see the sky
As blue as blue can be.
To stand below and wonder why
The blue is all you see.**

**Except the sun invades the blue
And golden splendour cast;
A vestige that the day is new
And yesterday is past.**

**This day is noble, like my bird,
A beauty to behold.
This day is special, take my word**

Vivid, sparkling, blue and gold.

ASJ

The Widecombe Fair Chestnut Mare

A young chestnut soon takes my fancy
At Widecombe Fair's summer sale.
A blaze on her nose
Sealed the deal, I suppose,
And the flail of a ruby red tail.

They cantered her round in the bull ring
I watched her, as handsome she stood;
I thought on the day
I would, if I may,
Adopt her ~ if only I could.

The auctioneer called her to enter
The bidding was due to be heard
I tendered a price
And amended it twice
Then followed it up with a third.

The offers were bellowed and gestured
And each drove the asking price high.
For horsehair and hoof
The price hits the roof
And is fixed with the wink of an eye.

The arena ebbs heatedly silent
Where perspiring droplets are shed.
My heart skips a beat
And falls to my feet
As I just sense the nod of my head.

So finally everyone falters
(And much to the dealer's delight)
The gavel falls ~ slam!

How gladsome I am,
As she sleeps in my stable tonight.

**< ~ Three Score Years and Ten ~ > --The Modernisation of
Psalm 90-- -A Diatribe-**

I think about it often
And not just now and then
I'm tough but will I soften
At three score years and ten.

It's stated in the Psalms
(Endorsed by James the First)
Manifest with all it's charms
Overt and plainly versed.

The term of man's endurance
Is three score years and ten,
Though Moses gave assurance
Of ten more years ~ amen.

If we contain the strength
(And thus we do we pray)
It's four score years in length,
Before we drift away.

Three score years and ten
Endows itself to rhyme;
Wordsmiths use it when
It's penned from time to time.

But now the scriptures' scribes
Revised the Bible's tongue,
Exposed to diatribes
From those who judge it wrong.

Then since my soul's creation,

My own opinion told,
In God's New World Translation
I'll be seventy young years old.

ASJ