

uncryptically

crypticbard



Presented by

My poetic side 

Dedication

*This first collection is dedicated to online poets both past and present, looking toward future days
together.*

Acknowledgement

Many thanks to all who make online poetry an experience worth coming back to, developing and nurturing. It as and will most likely be the best way to make use of internet time for the poet that finds themselves in a digital environment.

About the author

The Cryptic Bard is only cryptic on a couple of layers and once past those the heart and mind is free. The Bard's catch line is: "Cry Petey! The bards are coming!"

summary

reed music

5-7-5 a.1

no poetry by numbers

Happy birthday, William Wordsworth

Goodbye, Dad

Ballad of Billy McGee

waterfront recital

Rotterdam

Poet, Speak! or forever be silent

fly south

harvest moon

a nag called Time

You That Have

how I came to be

no promise of regret

thread diving

when roses bloomed

report card demolition

ode to the ferry pilot

steadfast chestplate

elegy for Jonathan, the prince

a lullaby

'til all my breath is you

Spring's possibilities

if we had wings to fly

Midnight Rendezvous

here

crocus buds

gems inside

spiral noose

bells appeal

considered exchanges

a poet's tears

What is 'forever' to a heart?

Elyssa, fugitive princess

open sesame

so, fill us with good things

simply hope

wash

i lurv u

Are you my butterfly?

windswept smiles

harvest

twilight promise

desire

harmonisation

let's dare to hope again

at the table, with you

(TSA) that focal moment

change that rope

what writing can be

after war, peace

The Rhymester

Summer Moon

home

silent glow

some things we overlook

summer streets

branches of a tree

promise

restless

pact

tidy gloomy trim

long night

penny for a lost thought

reminiscences

outback

the budding senescent

What's a decade here and there?

read to your satisfaction

Chatterton's redress

with you

new moon

dangling carrot

forsaking all else

the other side of the coin

and the moon whispered

tempest

that's a wrap

thanks for the applause

the insolent bystander

waterfront solitude

do you still remember

non-elegy

frequent flier

would-be people's queen

thicker than blood

impervious impermeability

waning gibbous

re(ad)writing poetry

Hey! You bit my sandwich!

live fed matins

hands off that snooze button!

days of the living dead

come together a-poeting

deep water treading

darkside bright

to be seen

site timeout

behind each poem

as the smoke clears

and I try to be brave

sunrising sunset

star gazing

take two

looking for a real bargain

not to be messed with

Paper Boat

longing for summer showers

Strindberg Principle

to be agreed

singularity

until the next post

advance of the hermit of Chester (1066 A.D.)

karaoke verse

through the night

licence to keel

moloch's dagger

rude regret

a feather called MacAroni

coaster poetry

dare we open the windows bleak

witless waxing

toward-winter verse

rail branches

forgive me, pater

main architect

end of the month

falling leaves

with you

minding your portals

seasonalities

fill each unruled page

in there somewhere was goodbye

sea change

asteriskos

fallen

muffly muppet

transitions

ode to Phillis Wheatley

irreconcilably different?

substacking

where might you be?

capricious recollections

fastidious malignment

skinned alive

negotiable leave

germinant style birthed

new car

benefit of drought

ice fishing anyone?

granny's steinway

never led astray

baggage claim delay

antipolarity

inimitable contrivances

what i'm not saying

crypticbard

with John and Paul

carillon

eternally connected

angel envy

booth chill

head gear all in poe

there

shapeshifting

Mr Right

not all that glisters is gold

grand coterie

I am not your cup of tea!

silver threaded web

aubade 2023

a vantaged perch

put a ring on it

basted glow

on the banks of the Oise

the silent quill

of resolute anticipation

pygmalean ivory

CBD

once

fee free

commit to pen

Why do we trust in you?

ever closer

not to be messed with

trinketry

flowershop blather

memorial garden

pinch and a punch

tongue in cheek

peering and squinting

inside out

hidden valentine

more than counting sheep

star signed

cure alls

cursors and curses

anthologizing

within reach

confrontational history

your holy book or mine?

wharfside reverie

headstone mash

no longer mine

going, not gone

supplication

exist-inguished crises

skyward

church with no parishioners

out of depth

purple martin calling

old soul

chiseled out

awkward footfalls

battle and dream

flight delayed

drifting home

murahachibu

hanami

stairs

full stop

seasonal diabetes

life from home

Kernou

bedtime symphony

come and get it

pyrite-technic

hearticulate

luminaries

lift

summer breeze

air quotes

manstrocity

Johnnie Walker

young love's shimmer

we're living in a meridian world

coronated

Mumble, the cat

plumbing depths

wilderness calling, again

bygones gone by

giant's demise

stars and gripes

cannery row

prehensile pledge

first snow blues

muse assistants

fair go

scare

blessing

leading you home

a small night music disarray

fare thee well

a little poem's wayfaring

leap of faith

always

beats

splice and sail

empty bookends

to change

mimesis by torchlight

squelch

pop goes resolve

manicured thoughts

door

dancing koto

good lad

minutiae

Faraday's lack

weedkillers

winter furnace

new bloom

break of dawn

truest frame

summer fête

Oktoberfest

the next day

reading the room

each time you leave

Cemetery

spend yourself

voice of one gone

kitchen reverie

absinthian reveries

lone plumeria

flamebuoyant

fly

recital

untimely demise

darkish hopefulness

stick to it

Spendthrift

Promises

of thunder and fire

Pandanus

a vantaged perch

a thought out of joint

Chatterton's Redress

smokescreen

gingko tree

Welcome to my limbo

N-tropy

pitcher plant

until that day comes

To Persephoné

limbo

Atacama symphony

pareidolia

wishful thinking

Branches of a tree

poetically breathe

There be no poetry-by-numbers

Pearly whites

?teqsun?

the only light

lone light

becoming keeper and herald

unlimiting

some things, we overlook

think of me

think of you

think of others

rosy cheeked

long distance for now

piano old

sea sponge fraying

rue the hay

mail carrier's bill

by fiction of pen

look out tomorrow

dream slices

verse on a hill

being an npc in their story

A Rare Edition

no longer spectral, Brontës shall remain

be-lightedly

A Familiar Stranger

The Burden of Upgrades

a rude remorse

ginkgo

in public view

in memory's wake

in the shadows

in whispers hush

Lmrk2410aa

jester's truth

in echoes wade

in vino veritas

in poetry's parish

in the mirror

in the light

together with heavy hearts

Oktoberfest

Whispers of a Wandering Soul

untitled (autumn sijo)

heavenly bodice

Time to Live

All Hallows? Eve (lullaby)

A Bridge Once Too Far

Dog-Tired Simplicity

Keloidal Suspension

One Such Day

The Beauty of a Kiss

A place where you belong

my daily dose of humanity

Admonitions for a young or emerging poet

not quite forgotten

Potato Time Travel

A Flash of Gordon

When pets make your day

Robbie and the Baroque Fiddle

Pirates? Cove

a true marriage of minds

Archeology of Understanding

Where do dreams flow?

awakening (haiku cluster)

Pizza Fit for a Queen

ashes from your urn

?Play It Again, Sam?

near or far of love

ode to the broken dream

when the downpour ends

mateship?s duty of care

winter?s embrace

Boy and Bonnet

a.c.r.o.n.y.m.s.

where I could no longer go home

tango of us

home is where the heart beats

Hidden Garden (reverse nonet)

The Quiet Conqueror

a makar?s legacy

life's no faerie tale

where is home?

unlikely treasures

Glimmer of Frost

The Silent Herald

a moment in between

season's jailbreak

autumn chofu

searching for a season

poetic persona

love unspoken

21-12-24

drunken suspension bridge

catch of the day

(without title)

Christmas Glow

through the eyes of a stranger

under pressure

grappling with Today

third wheel

elemental forge

these are the days

2025

spaces we inhabit: mornings

in candescent ascent

read to your satisfaction

here and there

A Seamstress's Courage

tarkovsky-esque

tears you could have cried

a grasp away

reflection by the sea

spaces we inhabit: with every breath

the lighthouse keeper's watch

once there was a boy

Help! There's a dragon in my stew!

spaces we inhabit: pre-dystopian reverie

time's no friend

CTRL + ALT + DLT

picnic by the sea

new day

Edgar Allan : Ravenous Poe, 216 years on

looking glass

not for lack of trying

don't know

star signed

an evolving presence

fleet-footed good

into the arms of night

bully-free

bridge is out

not to the swift

speak to them

where time stood still

sound of a day, precluded

untitled 575 (feathered frolick)

point of contact

along legacy way

poetspeak

they shall weep no more

piecemeal

cowardly survivor

companionable travelling

forever we shall be

all thinkers great and small

?my bloody valentine?

not your day, either?

once upon a long ago

?til all my breath is You

sheen of young love

untitled (bemused rumination)

Three dots dancing

beneath the nightingale?s call

Melbourne mosaic

? how to get to there

Bleak House: The Fog

Blossoming (2017)

(weighing in)

when echo lost its shadow

untitled 575 (what lingers on)

Castle Keep

Eclipse

?bear pottery?

minuet of the reeds

slipping away

recuperation

fluid mosaic

Presents from Penzance

goodbye robin

see you there

a royal pain

panhandler?s timepiece

boarding pass

wide road of the exterior

echoes of Babel

pulse

just my ?? luck

whale-watching season

unveiling

déjà brew

cure-alls

?the internet does not lie?

waterfront recital: reprise

and then us, content creators

Zara?s Choice

nocturne

forgive not forget

Denial, and friends

post-tempest chews

Antwerpen, 1995

is it all over for city cat?

waxing witless

a future's horizon

The Lost Key

ever onward

heartbeat

puppeteering farewell

eye on the road

Vilvoorde: wash

windswept smiles

d a n c e

Anton Ego

celestial threads

song to the stars

midnight courage

letting go: Anton Ego

pot plants

but a flesh wound

twilight trek

w o r d s

see you there

a poem's succession

cavernous

a miscreant yearns

once again

Ypres, lest we forget

printed word

hymn of the exiles

roaring tides

O Frenzied Light!

A Place

for the Unbroken

against the age

the fury's chant

revelatory

there is no lack in you

the thread between us

momEntary deEp

velveteen quietude

soul of time

to be real

starshift

sleep on it

stirred by the breeze

a reckoning of voices

Sven's Uninvited Guest

Thredbo (Winter 2025)

hair in the wind

it walks, not me

constants of change

Cry Petey, I See Bards Rounding the Bend

con un beso (with a kiss)

beautiful regret

what we'll always be

flight ready

Poet's Bush Call

unrelenting horizon

...in darkened silence

the wind speaks

ancient roots

the poet's barren tale

a lad's cards

veil of the known

where shadows do not drown

hobbitual

still the earth breathes

my poetic side

bridges

unyielding eyes

light between shadows

cluEleSs

in Wordsworth was my father's voice

lore-keeping

apologies

peel back the neon

between the veils

waltz of the wind

cannon shot fire

June 14, 2010: journal entry

baker's gift

closed windows

time's door

part savage, part human

feasting you

to the forgotten poet

vestibule

nev

starfall, freefall

drive on by

crossings

from the Archives of the Sunbeam

?flight from self?

an orchard's lament

grocery aisle poetry

2 Madame Ranevskaya's Reverie

where hermits go to shop

3 Lopakhin's Reflection

weekend unleashed

4 Trofimov, The Eternal Student

ode to Goldfinch

5 Varya and Anya's Vigil

riptide fantasia

murmur of whispers

choirside

"Sunday, Fun-Day"

6 Fir's Last Watch

right here, right now

epilogue: the seed beyond memory

?games we play?

firefly tandem

the road to here and there

"sunlit newsflash" (happy poems weekend suite)

reader, read her

unsending love

?spark of now?

"before the next breath"

"where we come from"

"flight mode"

Sunday Fun-Day: "Dawn"

a poetic lullaby

"our poetic sides"

"unspoken storms"

"a former dream"

the cupboard light

8-days in a gum-leaf blur

week in a wink

clarity

simple sample

we meet again, mid-sentence

eye of the beholder

moreton mirror

public square, Grote Markt Bruxelles

"the question"

a clockwork orangerie

gated folds

a poem is a verb

28 August 2025

dogfight interlude

the dam is breached

rose cycle (haiku set)

mythic greenhouse / hinge of words

the quill's nocturne

we met again, mid-sentence

?Lovin? where I live?

Cleaver of Devil?s Kitchen

an ill-fitting halo

?south of the equator?

Child, ONE CHILD

the old home

the river carries her

between shelves

foment in the firmament

of resonances

"weekend headline remix" (happy poems weekend suite)

ochre ledge against folding sky

homestead knights

over-shoulder weather

in the quiet tide

richer than old king Croesus

of silences

the saga in the hall

undertow

between the hours

rusted edges, burning gears

the fountain

the crooked compass

residue map

graduated cylinder

parallel universe in truth

Vincent

sunflowers

when roses were too much

a slow alarm

lights turned inward

contagion of kindness

the unfinished kiss

a hearth gone cold

interlude

the wonder of self-emptying

feedback reverb

thoughts on world homeless day (October 10)

skylight morning

gather your fragments

_ underscore _

but words keep rising...

beneath black tides

drinking hemlock

consolation in the kitchen

respectable

dance in the wake

weapons of mass distraction

in the waning light

Devon Pan

workday residue

the corkscrew

herd of words

first light

when we thought ourselves lost

"the inviolable"

V.I.P.

closing the distance

should paths recross

trickster in fur

the masked 'reader'

the promise of morning

in the end

pears in a moonlit orchard

a moment turning

after-image

farcical bloomery

eleventh hour remembrance

Chad on his soapbox

star black out

unhinged

signals

random inaccess

in the kitchen drawer

hello poetry

the road ahead

my only hymn

more than scribbles

senior formal (prom)

tu me manques (what Fox says)

self-deprecation

river's ardent flame

forever keep silent

ink on the Savannah

hearth of language

panels and tears

Wynken, Blynken, and Nod (reprise)

outstaring a blank wall

benign maleficence

call it survival

running into the mirror

cerulean chasm

no flowers

still waters stirred

as absence returns

a leafy bloom's pledge

of shards and fragments

fractious fractals

on the border of another day

lantana in the clearing

winter palette

there is a room

essence in Surikov

call it truth

before the day stirs

travel companions

a poem that builds itself

hills to climb

winterspeak

broad-back city

way into warmth

wintergreen

Pancras Pancakes

the bridge at dusk

endurings

cartography of echoes

farewell 2025

00:00, 2026

Moogerah spillway

All Hail! Parliament Train

a single drop

on being pulled back

small print of prophecy

snake incident, 3:14pm

into stillness

descent

the reckoning of verse

slowly turning

but you are still here

con-flakes

mason

blisspoint

Tale of the Bucolic Buccaneer

crow, at the edge of the yard

riddle of the two kin

motion obsessed

Nipper

dust to defiance

musings on winter's nights

Ascent

at first light

reflected light

Are Ya Done!?

the plunge

a celestial journey

be still

The Treaty of Scatterings

the rubber plant

observance

Montgomery Slyde

she rides the wind

let poem's arise

Occam's Razor

Friendly response

the promise of mourning

of thunder and fire

unknown quantity

a solitary room

north & south

?I see You?

10-01-2025

Brugge (September reverie)

corkscrew, reprise

What is it?

looking glass

alone

Letters from the Sanctuary

an unveiling

two eras in one land

she that rides with the wind

Elegy for Francis Thompson

another done

five characters

?snake eating its tale?

"dramatic monologue from Arthur Ross"

"time is of the essence"

nail-pierced hands

grimoire

"curioser"

each time you leave

Jacobin paranoia

Rotterdam

never in the hands

drifter?s melody

an architect?s aperture

letting you go

"she? poem number 8

"she cares"

of witnesses

"she orders me about"

"and now it's my fault"

"she's gutsy"

"fearing her own reflection"

the topography ahead

riverine rite

nightwalk

hallway split

unsigned horizon

wilderness kills

soul-trained

this is not goodbye

hail to embark

antebellum (before the war)

she asks of me

she's given me

keeping peace

amid the tumbleweed

sermon excerpt

a little lower

inroad spring

taking up arms

a willing silence

influence

infirm affectations

the shark silhouette

through the blue

side by side

before the ink runs dry

shower

the other impulse

when you are old

a morning like this

the horn keeps its own track

a daily challenge

turning clean

not the words

briefly

threads continue on

as the bugle fades

creekside picnic

a carrying forward

slope

curtain call

misreadings

writing on sand

poetical query

where your hand was

the fade

meme-ma

cooler months 2026

show you

shrug off this dis-ease

vespers of neon

mother, mother (2026)

waiting for a turn

what actually is

yard

reed music

Amber frosted reeds
in the summers wind
swaying, dancing,
synchronised now
syncopated and back
shouting then singing
xanthine etudes
boisterous and raucous
bright and nimble
leaving pliant
graceful kisses
on a soft smooth cheek.

5-7-5 a.1

birds chitter chatter
perched high upon tension wires
cable party line

no poetry by numbers

numbers do not the soul touch
or rouse from depths of reverie
whose shallow sepulchral beauty
surface deep revelations aplenty
plead with matrimonial vows, thus
parchment scribbles & ceremonies
do not a marriage make and
neither will ice cream make us
any colder after calories kick in
poetry's soul may ride its form
but transcends its empirical parts
its triumph for all to behold:
at last, Pinocchio sheds his strings

Happy birthday, William Wordsworth

It's May the 12th, 2022 and you graced this world 212 years ago.
A gorgeous night it must have been, and quite liberally serene,
Whence through these lands the daily toils would cease
While supper and vespers mingle with children's whispers
Perhaps unmoved by lofty aspirations bring before God
Unfettered by reservations, their heartfelt adoration.

Goodbye, Dad

yesterday at dawn
the moment a cloud-filled sky
blanketed grey
my eyelids scroll to see
and feel you waiting, free
through this jungle and
its concrete mountains
no longer away from thee
a second hand orbits
on poker-faced landscape
thought without thinking
sight without seeing
listen without hearing
solitary, anonymous,
scrunched forward
melancholy doldrum
on a dawn as dark as night
there shall be no burnished
dusk or starlit twilight
nor shall buds blossom forth
and on arrival, upon your urn
shall alight a lone plumeria
and a crystal tear

Ballad of Billy McGee

With disdain they looked upon one Billy McGee
a boy that promised never to be;
a rep that's scarred and scratched,
for sure his name's mismatched
as darker skin ya'ever did see
on blackish hair with reddish flecks of Billy McGee.
A red haired aboriginal boy
matches were only a toy
and he was caught red handed
and always branded
the troublesome fire starter.
Poor boy had no farda
he was stolen in a generation;
trouble, his one destination
for any of his wild-sown seed.
Never had a chance, Billy McGee.

waterfront recital

ribald footprints
of a silent, broken guitar
rendezvous with an ebbing tide:
recalcitrant thoughts wash away
along this sandy shore.

Rotterdam

Red train rested at Rotterdam station
Over the border to meet a friend
Trains all over Europe pass here
Today is a bright and sunny day
Every person glows in its brightness
Realising not a former disaster, that
During the 40's destruction erupted
Along these very streets, evacuated
Murderous bombs wreaking havoc

Poet, Speak! or forever be silent

a poem is the funeral pyre
of pulsations, once exhumed
but now still present;
fuelled by the flame of our
rue-filled memories
a poet is the gathering together
of thought and hope
that intermingle with the
burnished trim of
a late afternoon sky
and poetry is a dream
garbed in bilious words
whose raiment is laced
by meandering verse and
be-jewelled by barely parted lips:
It takes but a whisper
to free the wandering soul.

fly south

streaks through granite sheets
feathers flap against tinged sky
stalks sway in the breeze

harvest moon

shadowy sheets cover, dark, shining lips purse; pointy ears prick skyward as corn stalks pondered
chanting scarecrows curse in a sea of dreams left over

a nag called Time

An untamed spirit
She's been called
She waits for no one
And to none bow down;
No whisperer nor wizard
Could ever break her:
She goes on at her bidding
Deadlines send you reeling.
Tangle with her and you're done for,
How you'd come through, no telling.
But brash or brave
I must face her
Each second hand
A pulse-raiser
And time harnessed
shall be my steed into some future sunset
that I should still meet.

You That Have

You, who have hope
in things yet to be done,
words yet to be spoken;

You are blessed.

You, who have faith
in things never to be seen,
words never to be spoken:

You are beloved.

You, who have trust
in things already done,
words sincerely woven;

You are gifted.

You, who have love
in things freely given,
words taken in and shared;

You are loved.

how I came to be

it's when you looked my way
and first took notice of me...
that is how I came to be.

no promise of regret

As long as there are no longer
tears of sorrow and regret

May the kindest gestures
of filial affection ever beget;

our friendship has been
blest from shore to shore,

each wondrous exchange
our devotions now restore

thread diving

*people are our real legacy;
one day sure, entire poems
shall have been forgotten,
while remains a phrase or
a feeling drawn from wells
deeper than memory can
reach, or device can retrieve
much like thread-diving as
we scamper for posts buried
by traffic and flood posters...
follow, subscribe, or friend
buttons can only do so much
so we hang on to what we
have and hold dear, today
saving each precious moment
if bookmarked sentiments
are promises all will be well
we'll boldly breathe again*

when roses bloomed

There you are,
Playing domestics;
Passing each other

Cups & saucers

While I sit back,
Being waited upon
To take it all in -

This apparition
Of simple bliss.

Why was this not possible
When roses bloomed
In the garden?

report card demolition

Fresh and clean
to smell and feel
my favourite jeans
like second skin
but as i zip up
i feel a lump
a wad of fluff
a foreign feel
i pulled and fished
but there remained
fibres and particles
in the pocket deep
i pinch the bottom end
and pull from inside
'til it's fully out
a white-washed tongue
letting the wind

take up in its wings

the remaining fluff

of what once was

my marks and grades

of a school year done

obliterated, disintegrated

into lumps of pocket fluff

ode to the ferry pilot

Up on screen I hear them scream,
bright and vibrant, happy and sad-
words and stanzas on a digital pad.
I will always remember your poetry.

Within your verses each line offers
wonders - mysteries of thought,
universalities in observations caught.
I will always remember your expression.

A frequent flyer, expectant passenger,
beyond the distant shores I travel;
safely aboard your verbose vessel.
I shall always remember your name.

steadfast chestplate

toy soldier,
all for her
steadfast,

forever--

except for
one glaring
clerical error:

her tin heart
beats for another
toying; callous

sends him off

to slaughter; a
battler with no
shield or armour.

??

?

elegy for Jonathan, the prince

stately tall you meekly stand
on your finger the signet band
for my sake you shunned your crown
for my breath your devotion fierce
you gave for me your sword and squire
your hospitality did never tire
proud brothers in battle or play
companions going about each day
in your shadow I had no care
my home's cupboards were never bare
song and merriment never missed
hunger a stranger to my lips
your place at court set second to mine
your heart pure - best fruit of vine
your eyes reflect esteem so dear
no man's affection held so near
O gallant Prince in battle slain
my soul cries out for you in pain
Saul's crown you've set upon my head -
a long-held secret I shan't covet
My lord, one could never repay;
the debt of friendship's love dismay?
to live this life as noble and true
to generously care and give as you
Prince of the Realm, if you could hear
the *Scroll of the Upright*, loud and clear
in the *Song of the Bow* proclaimed
praise of our filial bond inscribed.

a lullaby

Hush now
don't fret
the lights are dim
my little pet
Sleep now
my love
wings tucked in
my little dove
,

'til all my breath is you

How have you inked
this palpitant heart?
Well, let me tell you:
Your barbs extend
long and deep and far,
far enough to pierce
skin of my resistance
with needlepoint of
your persistence.
But not only skin
deep; you refuse to
settle for what I
had to offer, deep--
you broke skin and
plunged deeper than
anyone ever did go
pierced right through
very venal lining
polluted my bloodstream
with your insistence
infusing ink of thought
rushing in its onslaught
sucked through mitral
port into my ventricle
left graffitied and stained
your ink spreading toxin
'til all my breath is you

Spring's possibilities

When your winter breaks into spring
think of new and wonderful things
while autumn creeps passed your window
break this winter free of sorrow
wait upon seasons - wait on life
live each day loving - escaping
weave each day's new strands - engaging
one day looking back - mem'ries rife.

if we had wings to fly

Much like Icarus, off they go;
until condensation metes them
reality's condescension:
Whose goals and objectives
are minute in life's greater scheme;
wings fashioned from floss harps-
Yet they soar each firmament;
nary a doubt would sway resolve;
no tempest or tumult could dissuade.
If you chance upon a cloudless day
catch their echo of jubilant cries
and contemplate your turn to fly.

Midnight Rendezvous

Join me in this boat of drunkenness,
Come with me and we shall both be drunk.
Let's sway beside what we think ourselves,
Swerving as the waves swell beneath us;
Lifting us to where lonely sounds warp,
While many other things become clear.

Come upon my mind, your tongue in mine,
And utter words that rend this turmoil;
The sound of madness not to be stilled,
Our silent voices, raging waters.

The world will list to one side of us
And back to the other in one beat.
Ghosts wail in the howling of the wind;
The sweat streams from a thousand souls,
They fling their drunken bodies upon us;
We feel only their salty wetness.

All at once they crash against this boat;
Their breath will chill the flaming sea,
Then drift back again to drowsy depths,
As our oars cut through this heady wine.

here

Here are words no longer spoken
of memories now faded and broken
hearted, but their onslaught remain
whose friendship and esteem contain.

After all these intervening years
this ever-filling cup of hopes and fears
bring these straying thoughts to bay
while days accrue and debtors pay.

Now being none the wiser, although
some things may ail a father, bestow
a gift no king's horses or men could offer
today shall likewise slip into forever.

Dear child, your heart is ever learning
more and more each day, you're turning
more like the self that you imagine
live each moment through this world's raucous din .

crocus buds

crocus buds burst forth
peep and poke through dunes of white
winter bows to spring

when the sun begins to shine again
vital truths on wood-lined paths arise

gems inside

as soon as it's spoken as soon as it's heard words evaporate words depreciate so, we try to keep them frozen and chisel them onto poems with a hope, come melt-time a fossilised facsimile resides

spiral noose

breathe:

all else

is

do

wn

wa

rd

spin.

bells appeal

.
peeling bells
rusting fine
heave and sigh
peal at twilight
embers thrashing about
glowing whispers
.

considered exchanges

turn your gaze to power
of life and death:
they lie dormant,
seeded potentialities;

a flower's expectancy
in each quiescent tongue
and those who love either
will surely sup of their fruit

a poet's tears

some time, somewhere, out there

someone had said
that one part of poetry
is a reservoir that holds
all the sadness of this world

What then does this say of a poet?

it is not seen how
that portion poets bear
bare on virginal leaves
all their flight and fears

are tears morphed in pressed ink

What is 'forever' to a heart?

It's never easy to step out into the sunlight
away from the safety of your walls - indoors.
Sometimes you forget just how hard it can get,
Until a door slams shut in your face midstep-
knowing that you threw the hinges of yours.

It's never fair when you give your heart away,
only to find their forever ended yesterday-
That you will from here on forward love on,
caring for both your heart and theirs-
the un-requitedness would be for sure.

It's never too late to hope and dream of good;
all will be well if we trust in the heart we love-
that what has brought us together upholds,
until a window opens up and lets light in again:
darkness has no place - forever eternally bright.

Elyssa, fugitive princess

tragic queen Elissa, foundress
of Carthage. Her brother, Pygmalion
slew her husband, the chief priest
Acharbas and in the uproar fled
with Tyrian nobles, bearing gold
on a fleet of Phoenician ships.
Then on Mauritanian coastline
she bought some land to build
a new city-state, from the vantage
of Byrsa on which her citadel stands
'circumfenced' by strips of ox-hide
strung along the perimeter of the hill
The Berber chieftain rather stingily
offered as much land as a ox-hide
could cover and later on sought her
hand in marriage as the city grew
in wealth and regional importance
but she threw herself into flames
of a priestly funeral pyre to Tanit
in self-immolation for the dead
god of vegetation, Adonis-Eshmun
Dido, as she was known, hence was
elevated to goddess and patroness
of that great Punic realm of Carthage

open sesame

*people's cupboards and fridges
tell a curious tale of everything
some a cluttered obstacle course
others an impenetrable rain forest
some coyly veiling their secrets
others flamboyantly revealing
mysteries both shallow and deep
behind doors their treasures keep*

.

so, fill us with good things

there was a vacancy in a place
where an abyss engulfed chastity
a concept strange and quite suspect
in a world were we value prospect;
a rarity to sanely slumber at night

and receive sagely uttered sentiment
whose aid in these moonlit promises
birth occupancy in vacillating crises
perhaps a constancy redeems piety;
another word that reveals this malady

simply hope

. brioche mornings bright, sunny fluffy moorings cast away off sun-kissed horizon, ne'er set
dreams astray ?

wash

.
Spun out of control.
Bobbing then pomeled, squashed then bloated.
A lone occupant within the confines of a tumble dryer
at full spin....
An impatient hand lifts the lid off
with deft, well practised fingers
hopeful that in so doing would speed up the process.
The spinning abruptly stops
resuming only when the lid is firmly shut
securely in place.
With a banging and a rattling
the tumbling ensues... digits lifting
assured the interruption overridden.
The mind opens to the fact that
there is one entry and one exit
on this front loader churning
Its machinations moistens the
dank air and frigid tiles with
a slimy condensation.
A final click breaks the dense
silence.
From inside the searing metal tub
emerges a once bright red garment
its fabric faded, familiar, and frayed.
.

i lurv u

mess with this heart
why don't you? still
oblivious to all you are
all the effects you have
messing this here heart

swagger into the room
head careening, askew
slurring pronouncements
your fond affections spew
I lurv you..... I lurv you

why burden this heart
when sober, always aloof
hardly your eyes meet mine
tongue-tied and twisted
no words, no touch, no smile

wake up, sober up and see
there is so much more, here
more than cooler cans in hand
or that awful look in your eyes
as you sway, pleading, with me

Are you my butterfly?

My butterfly is no longer mine,
I wonder if she ever really was;
When she alights on my shoulder
I know she wants me to hold her -
Flies off and she's mine no longer.

My butterfly so frail and fine,
I wonder if I was ever hers;
When she returns to kiss me again
I know she's more than just a friend -
Flies off and gone forever more.

windswept smiles

long, top down drives even shirtless tans sweet strawberry kisses and glorious watermelon stains
laughter lifting through the trees glimpses of sun blest promises sugar coated whispers catching in
the breeze fruit bowls, waterholes and refreshing icy poles interlacing fingers share starry nights
and lazy days .

harvest

.
over many moons and calendars
over many many miles of verse
both in sharing and receiving, lines
feeding an ever emptying purse
may these blossoms fruit among their vines
.

twilight promise

.

a husk, a shell that's fallen off
the back that bore its longest day
to struggle for release supreme
from odious yesterday redeemed

i gaze in stupefied wonder
and peer into the dusky swirls
of the distant peeling thunder
that offers me a new day's thrill

.

desire

flame

.

running faster than
you can flutter a lash

flash

rushing swifter than
we can sniff a flower

fresh

rippling quieter than
they can queue on Black
Friday

harmonisation

music and words
together
pluck on heartstrings
forever

let's dare to hope again

in spite of what surrounds us
whatever circumstances are
we learn to find peace
within ourselves
regardless of what's

going on around us,
learning to self-soothe
kind of thing and find
we all come through
to the other side, strong

persons we've missed;
our friendships through
a new season approaching
and a sense begins to form
that peace rising up from

inside the very core of you!
and it's a happy moment
this first day of autumn
here, although summer
is quite happily overstaying

so colours are changing
and the breeze is blowing
face the horizon, your hair
a banner waving, highlights
in sun beams, catch and shine

at the table, with you

Thereupon a banquet spread
delectable dishes arrayed
greens, meats, fruit, and wine
marine, fowl, farm, and vine
Alongside me your visage bright
imbibing, ingesting, we sup
from selfsame platter dine
my heart yours and yours mine

(TSA) that focal moment

It may be dark;
but tonight
effervescent lights dance
to a blaring par-tay tune

while in the shadows, we parlay...

reach over me
and flick the switch;
let bokeh find clarity
in our fervent embrace.

change that rope

The well has not gone dry,
less frequented maybe
by both the drawers and
the occasional passersby.

The stones are loose;
between them, mortar dissolves-
by clement or contrary
weather on seasonal cue.

The vessel is parched
and longs for its lover
by pulley once lowered
its rope frayed with disuse.

what writing can be

.
often it is the only
etched thing
between you and
improbability.

no stink kicked up,

no feigning love,
no affluence
can even
hatch it.

.

after war, peace

.

bridge of light flashes

blue oceans cross currents

rainbow cloudless skies

.

The Rhymester

There he goes pacing, this young man,
I see his shadows through the shades;
Drawn to lift them but didn't dare
For then his face he hid and fled

I know my shadow is all he'd see
From behind the blinds that us divide
He reaches out and reaches in
His arms are weak, too frail and thin

He cries out with all his being
Screaming, cursing, with voiceless words;
They fly and hurtle towards me,
Scratching, gouging, making craters.

'Why?' he asks, the eternal, WHY?
Flailing his arms against that sky.
I reply with hoarse crackling sounds,
Noises of one without the answers.

I stand before him fixedly,
Stared down the shadow at myself
It is dark in there, in his room
But at night this Youth's windows glow.

At the time when all is quiet,
What is it he might be doing?
He reaches in and reaches out,
Arms not needed to block the sun.

The shades roll up of their own will,
No blinding light to sear his face
And then his sparkling eyes meet mine,

His silent words bestowing life.

Summer Moon

There is a mystery about her
That even at night she casts shadows;
You'll find her playful as well as kind,
No other friend in the dark to find.

She's out when it's too early for bed,
When the lights are on and the sun has fled;
Her face smiles with a soft silver glow,
Her breath you'll feel as the night winds blow.

She invites you to join her in play,
To have some fun at the end of a day;
That you may smile in your dreams tonight,
And in the morn get up fresh and bright.

home

thoughts for that House that Time built
where a life had been lovingly wrapped
in emotion and garlanded with thoughts:
share with us, like unto fragmented bits
of tinsel confetti or silvery-speckled sand
in the briny breeze of life-catching sunlight
that reflects who you are in flowing words-
well-used tree-lined avenue of yesterdays

silent glow

silent glow

some things we overlook

summer streets

summer streets

branches of a tree

branches of a tree

promise

.

a husk, a shell that's fallen off
the back that bore it's long day
a struggle supreme to be released
redeemed from odious yesterdays

i gaze at this in stupefied wonder
and peer into the dusky swirls
of the distant pealing thunder
that offers a promise of new days

.

restless

Is remorse a prison to the soul
the sole utterance of reproach
that if not to myself be True
the possible best in life accrue

What if regret creeps on the morning
a thief stalking the shadow of dawn
as fresh from bare motive drawing
crystal arteries of a day that is new

or shall we allow the mind meander
let it's "work" find itself crowning
there in its core uncover simplicity
strip away a mournful state of heart

pact

would you
for the love of
me
tie this lace
upon a tree

when the wind
upon it blows
my heart
on yonder river flows

tidy gloomy trim

TRIM, slim, and shiny

I search and rummage

through the vanity

my nails all grimey

Trim claw-like integument

clip--clip-- snip and clip

get them all in shape

file them, keep them squared

TRIM, slim, and shiny

back into the vanity

the drawer is never tidy

my nails no longer grimy

long night

long night

penny for a lost thought

<https://imgur.com/a/7aa0dMN>

reminiscences

*memory is a child seen
and waiting to be heard*

outback

haiku

the budding senescent

~ imPRESSions ~

What's a decade here and there?

imPRESSions

read to your satisfaction

imPRESSions

Chatterton's redress

~ imPRESSions ~

with you

~ imPRESSions ~

new moon

~imPRESSions~

dangling carrot

~ imPRESSions ~

forsaking all else

~ imPRESSions ~

the other side of the coin

tossed in the upward of the downside
flips and turns, glinting in the sun
what will it be today, latch key kid?
as you step onto that creaking, broken
"home sweet home" frayed and faded
fading still

buffeted in the upper bunk of insomniacs
'dis funk sho n'all' can see what's coming
down its warren, rabbit holes abound
as you edge along a swinging tight wire
don't look down, sharps and broken glass
waiting still

scratches on top corners of empty pages
scribbles and riddles eventually forming
thoughts of a house Time won't ever build
shards spray and sparkle, catch waning light
fragmenting images take on moonlit flight
flying still

and the moon whispered

~ imPRESSions~

tempest

~ imPRESSions ~

that's a wrap

~ imPRESSions ~

thanks for the applause

~ imPRESSions ~

the insolent bystander

~ imPRESSions ~

waterfront solitude

~ imPRESSions ~

do you still remember

~ imPRESSions ~

non-elegy

~ imPRESSions ~

frequent flier

~ impressIONS ~

would-be people's queen

~ impressIONS ~

thicker than blood

~ impressIONS ~

impervious impermeability

~ imPRESSions ~

waning gibbous

~ imPRESSions ~

re(ad)writing poetry

~ imPRESSions ~

Hey! You bit my sandwich!

~ imPRESSions ~

live fed matins

~ imPRESSions ~

hands off that snooze button!

~ impressIONS ~

days of the living dead

~ impressIONS ~

come together a-poeting

come together a-poeting
in collegial harmony
and cast an olive branch
on needless animosity
therein find revelries of
that true marriage of minds

deep water treading

beautiful daughters, useful sons loophole lawyers slimy creative cons both work the system rather work with the system either that or tire and cramp floating adrift while deep water treading

darkside bright

~ imPRESSions ~

to be seen

~ exPRESSions ~

site timeout

when a timeout occurs
and all them eggs are in one basket
each and every one of them forget
unless on another one, poems stack;
no hope at all to get them back
just this day at the café for writers
throughout the day, timed out

behind each poem

~ imPRESSions ~

as the smoke clears

~ imPRESSions ~

and I try to be brave

~ imPRESSions ~

sunrising sunset

~ imPRESSions ~

star gazing

~ imPRESSions ~

take two

<https://youtu.be/1qDy4OMAgY>

~ imPRESSions ~

looking for a real bargain

~ imPRESSions ~

not to be messed with

~ imPRESSions ~

Paper Boat

~ imPRESSions ~

longing for summer showers

~ imPRESSions~

Strindberg Principle

~ imPRESSions ~

to be agreed

we will not always agree; that's the apogee
and we can always strive not to disagree disagreeably
when we agree to disagree agreeably; sweet perigee
are we agreed?

singularity

~| imPRESSions |~

until the next post

~ imPRESSions ~|

advance of the hermit of Chester (1066 A.D.)

~ imPRESSions ~

karaoke verse

~ imPRESSions ~

through the night

~ imPRESSions ~

licence to keel

~ imPRESSions ~

2/50 orchallenge

moloch's dagger

~ imPRESSions ~

rude regret

~ imPRESSions ~

a feather called MacAroni

~ imPRESSions ~

coaster poetry

~ imPRESSions ~

dare we open the windows bleak

~ imPRESSions ~

witless waxing

~ imPRESSions ~

toward-winter verse

~ imPRESSions ~

rail branches

~ imPRESSions ~

forgive me, pater

~ imPRESSions ~

main architect

~ imPRESSions ~

end of the month

It's placed on Amazon's kindle store in the UK;
The Writing Group, is more about poems
and thoughts that have been transcribed in a
poetic fashion while in the thick of participation at
and about Online Poetry.

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Writing-Group-Frederick-Kesner-ebook/dp/B0B8RNVQ7Q/ref=sr_1_1?crid=2KG04U9X3GUHQ&keywords=The+writing+group+kesner+frederick&qid=1667198103&s=digital-text&sprefix=the+writing+group+kesner+frederick%2Cdigital-text%2C397&sr=1-1

Your support is highly welcome & appreciated
and the attractive pricing is light on the pocket!

~ imPRESSions ~

falling leaves

~ imPRESSions ~

with you

~ imPRESSions ~

minding your portals

~ imPRESSions ~

seasonalities

~ imPRESSions ~

fill each unruled page

~ imPRESSions ~

in there somewhere was goodbye

~ imPRESSions ~

sea change

~ imPRESSions ~

asteriskos

~ imPRESSions ~

fallen

~ imPRESSions ~

muffly muppet

~ imPRESSions ~

transitions

~ imPRESSions ~

ode to Phillis Wheatley

~ imPRESSions ~

irreconcilably different?

~ imPRESSions ~

substacking

~ imPRESSions ~

where might you be?

~ imPRESSions ~

capricious recollections

~ imPRESSions ~

fastidious malignment

~ imPRESSions ~

skinned alive

~ imPRESSions ~

negotiable leave

~ imPRESSions ~

germinant style birthed

~ imPRESSions ~

new car

~ imPRESSions ~

benefit of drought

~ imPRESSions ~

ice fishing anyone?

~ imPRESSions ~

granny's steinway

~ imPRESSions ~

never led astray

~ imPRESSions ~

baggage claim delay

~ imPRESSions ~

antipolarity

~ imPRESSions ~

inimitable contrivances

~ imPRESSions ~

what i'm not saying

~ imPRESSions ~

crypticbard

~ imPRESSions ~

with John and Paul

~ imPRESSions ~

carillon

~ imPRESSions ~

eternally connected

~ imPRESSions ~

angel envy

~ imPRESSions ~

booth chill

~ imPRESSions ~

head gear all in poe

~ imPRESSions ~

there

~ imPRESSions ~

shapeshifting

~ imPRESSions ~

Mr Right

~ imPRESSions ~

not all that glisters is gold

~ imPRESSions ~

grand coterie

~ imPRESSions ~

I am not your cup of tea!

~ imPRESSions ~

silver threaded web

~?imPRESSions ?

aubade 2023

~ imPRESSions ~

a vantaged perch

~ imPRESSions ~

put a ring on it

~ imPRESSions ~

basted glow

~ imPRESSions ~

on the banks of the Oise

~ imPRESSions ~

the silent quill

~ imPRESSions ~

of resolute anticipation

~ imPRESSions ~

pygmalean ivory

~ imPRESSions ~

CBD

~ imPRESSions ~

once

~ imPRESSions ~

fee free

~ imPRESSions ~

commit to pen

~imPRESSions ~

Why do we trust in you?

~ imPRESSions ~

ever closer

~ imPRESSions ~

not to be messed with

~ imPRESSions ~

trinketry

~ imPRESSions ~

flowershop blather

~ imPRESSions ~

memorial garden

~ imPRESSions ~

pinch and a punch

~ imPRESSions ~

tongue in cheek

~ imPRESSions ~

peering and squinting

~ imPRESSions ~

inside out

~ imPRESSions ~

hidden valentine

~ imPRESSions ~

more than counting sheep

~ imPRESSions ~

star signed

~ imPRESSions ~

cure alls

~ imPRESSions ~

cursors and curses

~ imPRESSions ~

anthologizing

~ imPRESSions ~

within reach

~ imPRESSions ~

confrontational history

~ imPRESSions ~

your holy book or mine?

~ imPRESSions ~

wharfside reverie

~ imPRESSions ~

headstone mash

~ imPRESSions ~

no longer mine

~ imPRESSions ~

going, not gone

~ imPRESSions ~

supplication

~ imPRESSions ~

exist-inguished crises

~ imPRESSions ~

skyward

~ imPRESSions ~

church with no parishioners

no other quiet place to be had the noise held at abeyance for once a clear line of thought within an ocean that is quelled no other reason to escape to the hesitation means no mediation for once meditation brings relief within a garden that is well trimmed no other family to hold dear the abandonment our souls steer for once a soul stirs in anticipation within a crested grotto hemmed

~ imPRESSions ~

out of depth

~ imPRESSions ~

purple martin calling

~ imPRESSions ~

old soul

~ imPRESSions ~

chiseled out

~ imPRESSions ~

awkward footfalls

~ imPRESSions ~

battle and dream

~ imPRESSions ~

flight delayed

~ imPRESSions ~

drifting home

~ imPRESSions ~

murahachibu

~ imPRESSions ~

hanami

~ imPRESSions ~

stairs

~ imPRESSions ~

full stop

~ imPRESSions ~

seasonal diabetes

~ imPRESSions ~

life from home

~ imPRESSions ~

Kernou

~ imPRESSions ~

bedtime symphony

~ imPRESSions ~

come and get it

~ imPRESSions ~

pyrite-technic

~ imPRESSions ~

hearticulate

~ imPRESSions ~

luminaries

~ imPRESSions ~

lift

~ imPRESSions ~

summer breeze

~ imPRESSions ~

air quotes

~ imPRESSions ~

manstocity

~ imPRESSions ~

Johnnie Walker

~ imPRESSions ~

young love's shimmer

~ imPRESSions ~

we're living in a meridian world

~ imPRESSions ~

coronated

~ imPRESSions ~

Mumble, the cat

~ imPRESSions ~

plumbing depths

~ imPRESSions ~

wilderness calling, again

~ imPRESSIONS ~

bygones gone by

~ imPRESSions ~

giant's demise

~ imPRESSions ~

stars and gripes

~ imPRESSions ~

cannery row

~ imPRESSions ~

prehensile pledge

~ imPRESSions ~

first snow blues

~ imPRESSions ~

muse assistants

~ imPRESSions ~

fair go

~ imPRESSions ~

scare

~ imPRESSions ~

blessing

~ imPRESSions ~

leading you home

~ imPRESSions ~

a small night music disarray

~ imPRESSions ~

fare thee well

~ imPRESSions ~

a little poem?s wayfaring

~ imPRESSions ~

leap of faith

~ imPRESSions ~

always

~ imPRESSions ~

beats

~ imPRESSions ~

splice and sail

~ imPRESSions ~

empty bookends

~ imPRESSions~

to change

~ imPRESSions ~

mimesis by torchlight

~ imPRESSions ~

squelch

~ imPRESSions ~

pop goes resolve

~ imPRESSions ~

manicured thoughts

~ imPRESSions ~

door

~ imPRESSions ~

dancing koto

~ imPRESSions ~

good lad

~ imPRESSions ~

minutiae

~ imPRESSions ~

Faraday's lack

~ imPRESSions ~

weedkillers

~ imPRESSions ~

winter furnace

~ imPRESSions ~

new bloom

~ imPRESSions ~

break of dawn

~ imPRESSions ~

truest frame

~ imPRESSions ~

summer fête

~ imPRESSions ~

Oktoberfest

the next day

reading the room

each time you leave

~ impressIOns ~

Cemetery

~ imPRESSions ~

spend yourself

~imPRESSions ~

voice of one gone

~ imPRESSions ~

kitchen reverie

~ imPRESSions ~

absinthian reveries

~ imPRESSions ~

lone plumeria

~exPRESSions~

flamebuoyant

~ exPRESSions~

fly

~ imPRESSions ~

recital

~ exPRESSions ~

untimely demise

~ exPRESSEd ~

darkish hopefulness

~ exPRESSions ~

stick to it

~ exPRESSions ~

Spendthrift

~ exPRESSions ~

Promises

~ exPRESSions ~

of thunder and fire

~ exPRESSions ~

Pandanus

~ exPRESSions ~

a vantaged perch

~ exPRESSions ~

a thought out of joint

~ exPRESSions ~

Chatterton?s Redress

~ exPRESSions ~

smokescreen

~ exPRESSions ~

gingko tree

~ exPRESSions ~

Welcome to my limbo

~ exPRESSions ~

N-tropy

A year-end getaway
by air and land and sea:
may you N-joy, N-ergise,
N-corporate new found things;
return to us safely N-ervated
and keep away all form of N-tropy

pitcher plant

~ exPRESSions ~

until that day comes

~ exPRESSions ~

To Persephoné

~ exPRESSions ~

limbo

~ exPRESSions ~

Atacama symphony

~ exPRESSions ~

pareidolia

~ imPRESSions ~

wishful thinking

~ imPRESSions ~

Branches of a tree

~ imPRESSions ~

poetically breathe

~ exPRESSions ~

There be no poetry-by-numbers

~ exPRESSions ~

Pearly whites

~ exPRESSions ~

?teqsun?

~ exPRESSions ~

the only light

~ imPRESSions ~

lone light

~ exPRESSions ~

becoming keeper and herald

~ exPRESSions ~

unlimiting

~ exPRESSions ~

some things, we overlook

~ imPRESSions ~

think of me

~ exPRESSions ~

think of you

~ exPRESSions ~

think of others

~ exPRESSions ~

rosy cheeked

~ exPRESSions ~

long distance for now

~ exPRESSions ~

piano old

frost laced teeth of cracked leather
course through bare back thighs
frigid sheen of yellowed ivory
caress tentative fingertips
nose, cheek and ear
incline then enquire
old smell, old sound
ancient piano sing

sea sponge fraying

by the sea face in face
a child's visage open
fraught in fear, freedom and friendship
predators, salt, sand
waves crash, rocks cut
chest crushing breaths
from watery garden sea sponge plucked
beside shells and stones
by a farcical display
feigning, fawning, flaunting: fearful now
petulant sand in shoe
soaks nothing better
no return, no exchange

rue the hay

all have gone far and wide
there, a fair distance away
where no eye spy nor stray
only hindsight dare confide
even sproutlings coy in Spring
no fresh joys will they bring
still from Sun, buds cannot hide

mail carrier's bill

leeward of a lean-to hill
iambic cadence thrill
amber flecked lemonade
morsels don pleated frill
bring on tend'rest brocade
while at windward dale
wizened cheeks go pale

by fiction of pen

fictionalising that pain
only in writer's quill remain
inkwell daily welling over
one that never need run dry
on pristine sheets shall ever cry
there a field blanketed in clover
under pregnant sky contain
descends yon seasonal rain

look out tomorrow

The letterbox is usually empty
What with the P.O. Box and
social media, emails, SMS
all so many differing ways
to keep ourselves in touch.
But this day's walk down the
drive had changed the day!
A notice arrived, in paper
from hospital's renal unit.
This path may lead clear
or perhaps to dialysis or
even a kidney transplant.
So look out, Tomorrow
quite surely here we come.

dream slices

once nimble fingers
grasp at lithe reeds
as they slip and dance
in a breeze's lullaby
ever present companions
as days turn into nights

verse on a hill

A known quantity bereft of quality;
a name of little beyond its letters,
by road's shoulder perhaps guide

to openly weep a slippery slope
of once having known someone's art
yet lay hold naught of their heart

eternally flowing river of kindnesses
shall meander, thoughts ever caress
even when words and faces now drift

a familiar feeling remains here still
years invested this regenerating gift
lines and verse ever ascend that hill

being an npc in their story

Yesterday's spoken word

Today's unvoiced silence

Tomorrow's welcomed regret

press Play and tap Mute

Flickering screen brings slumber.

A Rare Edition

In Kilmarnock's print, a treasure lies,
A first edition, where history sighs,
From eighteen eighty-six, its verses flow,
Robert Burns' heart, in dialect aglow.

Poems Chiefly In The Scottish Dialect,
Whispers of love, and nature's effect,
Expected to fetch a princely sum,
Fifty to sixty thousand?oh, how it'll hum!

Once just six hundred, a modest start,
Three shillings it cost, a work of pure art,
Yet within a month, the copies all gone,
Burns' voice, like a lark, sung sweet at dawn.

"*To A Mouse*" and "*The Twa Dogs*" share,
Stories of life, in the Scottish air,
At twenty-seven, with passion he wrote,
A legacy penned in each heartfelt note.

Now just eighty-eight copies remain,
A glimpse of the past, a poet's refrain,
As the auction approaches, the whispers grow loud,
For the magic of Burns, we all stand so proud.

no longer spectral, Brontës shall remain

In London's solemn *Poets' Corner* stands,
A stone of memories, carved by gentle hands.
Eighty-five years since its first debut,
Yet names were incomplete, a hidden rue.

Amidst the shadows of a war-torn night,
Charlotte, Emily, and Anne lost their light,
The dots above their names? a simple grace?
Forgotten in the haste, in that troubled space.

Sharon Wright, with keen and watchful eye,
Spotted the error, wondered why.
*"Have they not earned this small tribute,
To mark their legacy, resolute?"*

With a stonemason's tap, the dots took form,
A celebration of sisters, in art reborn.
Painted with care, the correction shines,
Echoing the strength of their woven lines.

From Bradford's heart, where their stories bloom,
Wright sought to banish the lingering gloom.
For every tale of love, loss, and strife,
Deserves to be honoured, enriched with life.

Now near Dickens and Austen, their names align,
In the warmth of remembrance, their spirits entwine.
Eighty-five years later, at last they belong,
A tribute to brilliance, a sweet, timeless song.

be-lightedly

being an unlit candle
an unlit match stick
will surely not suffice
neither the twain shall meet
unless you strike one
the other remains and
unless the lit shall kiss it
the other still abides

A Familiar Stranger

A barely audible creak greeted me
As I entered this still unfamiliar place.
His figure approached, step by step, slowly,
Aged and wizened, his steps marked with grace.

But for his slouch, he could be any man,
Now so much smaller than my childhood fear.
Not the monstrous terror of long ago,
A different presence, yet so close, so near.

There I stood, a deer caught in the light,
Shaking off the shadows of my fright,
In the haze of ill-served remembrance,
Realizing that I loved him all along,

A bond transformed by time's gentle embrace,
From phantom fears to love's enduring song.

The Burden of Upgrades

Not all upgrades are a welcome sight,
For many don't enhance or truly prove;
Yet status quo might yield a different light,
When deemed "a waste of talent" in the groove.
More than past reckonings, a heavier weight,
Now seen as waste of space, of breath, of time.
A shift from promise to a darker fate,
As hopes once bright now seem to barely climb.
In shadows cast by others' sharp disdain,
The worth we carry fades beneath the strife,
Yet still, we yearn to break from this refrain,
To find our strength and reclaim what is Life.
So let not labels bind us in their thrall,
For within us all, a spark awaits the call.

a rude remorse

Of the many things
that have been a regret
"putting down the pen"
has been most rude.

ginkgo

More wistful now than poignant,
Whistling softly with the wind,
Dancing dapples of recollection,
Allow forgetfulness to begin.

Whirling notions stirred aloft,
Willowy wisps in pirouettes,
Patina-ed shimmer intertwines,
Sure Hope no regret can forget.

in public view

In public spaces, moments pierce the soul,
Excruciating scenes that resonate deep.
Abandoned at the mall, I lose control,
You've turned away, your silence cuts, and weeps.

It's not about the meals left on this tray,
But rather the weight of what remains unsaid.
So here we stand, with hearts in disarray,
Don't come back now, let this chapter end.

What's left is emptiness, a hollow score,
Go on, don't look behind at what you've wrought.
You've ravaged me, and I can't take much more,
The pain persists, a lesson harshly taught.

Yet still, I stand, though shattered to the core,
In view of this, I find I can't say more.

in memory's wake

Do you remember? Would you know my gait
If only words were left to bear my truth?
While all else lies concealed behind the weight,
Perhaps our thoughts could bridge the loss of Youth.

In conversation's dance, our souls may meet,
Recalling days when we rode waves of verse.
With every line, their rhythm felt so sweet,
Yet now, it seems we've drifted?just a curse.

If only you had shared my silent plight,
To linger in dark echoes of the past,
Would memories ignite like stars at night,
Reminding us that bonds like ours can last?

So let us seek those moments once again,
And find the path where poetry began.

in the shadows

Verse 1

Arise and walk these shadowed streets,
Breathe deep the remnants of a time long past,
Whose industrial heart still beats,
In toxic fumes, our visions cast.

Chorus

Oh, lift the banner, brave and torn,
Let the bitter winds collide,
Through every crack, through every scorn,
Hope's light will be our guide.

Verse 2

Parted lips share wisdom's song,
Breaking silence that binds the soul,
In every echo, we belong,
Orphaned hearts, we make whole.

Chorus

Oh, lift the banner, brave and torn,
Let the bitter winds collide,
Through every crack, through every scorn,
Hope's light will be our guide.

Verse 3

Release those questions buried deep,
Can we forgive what Time has lost?
Awaken dreams from restless sleep,
And rise above their heavy cost.

Chorus

Oh, lift the banner, brave and torn,
Let the bitter winds collide,

Through every crack, through every scorn,
Hope's light will be our guide.

Outro

Illumine horizons once concealed,
As morning calls, we'll break these chains,
With voices strong, our truth revealed,
From this darkness, our Spirit gains.

in whispers hush

In whispers hushed, we ponder distance wide,
Yet what of closeness, pressing ever near?
In spaces shared, our hearts may clash and chide,
And breast feels heavy when the end is clear.

Too much togetherness can stifle breath,
Each moment tangled, bodies pressed too tight;
Ants march on pins, a dance that hints of death,
As love's own gaze reveals a troubled plight.

Yet through this fray, our hearts remain in tune,
For true affection thrives in varied ways;
Be it in distance or the heat of noon,
Love finds its path, through nights and endless days.

So whether far or close, let spirits soar,
For love, unbounded, seeks to know us more.

Lmrk2410aa

A number's just a simple sign,
Yet deeper meanings intertwine.
Like scars that tell a tale,
Each figure's more than pale?
A life lived in each line, so divine!

jester?s truth

Jester laughs out loud
Words dance upon evening light,
Truth veiled in chaos,

Consciousness whispers of peace?
In the sand, we write our hopes.

in echoes wade

In shadows deep, that bell does toll,
A whispering wind, a heart grown cold.
Each chime a memory, softly fell,
An echo faintly fades in sombre knell.

Dreams once bright now dimly and pale,
Like autumn leaves in a mournful gale.
Yet from the ashes, new life may swell,
For endings whisper stories yet to tell.

in vino veritas

These words pour forth,
fluid as cheap wine,
vividly dressed,
like any branded vintage.

Gentle on tired pockets,
they dull the mind's edge;
after a few goblets,
they all blend into one.

in poetry's parish

In a world where shadows stretch and whisper,
A parish blooms in pixels, soft and bright,
Where words, like fragile lanterns, flicker,
Defying the encroaching, endless night.

Parishioners gather, each heart a verse,
Weaving their stories in this tangled web,
From quiet corners, they echo and converse,
In stanzas that rise, like spume at tide's ebb.

They craft their hymns in defiance of fate,
Ink spills like blood each byte, each digital page,
Together they nurture, together they sate,
A thirst for connection, a stage for their rage.

Each line a lifeline, each rhyme an embrace,
In the bleakness of screens, they find their reprieve,
Creating a sanctuary, a sacred space,
Where the lost can belong, and the hopeful believe.

In the parish of poetry, dreams intertwine,
Community born from the ashes of strife,
With verses like roots, they anchor and bind,
Building a harbour where imagination's rife.

So gather, dear poets, in this vast, shared expanse,
Let your voices rise up, let your spirits collide,
In our dystopia's grip, let your words take a chance,
Together, in verse, we'll no longer be belied.

in the mirror

In the mirror's soft light, a story unfolds,
Crow's feet like whispers, in laughter retold.
Creases of wisdom etched deeper than skin,
Each line a reminder of life's journeys within.
Liver spots dance like memories aglow,
Moments of joy, heartaches, and woe.
A tapestry woven from laughter and tears,
A testament crafted across passing years.
These marks of the past, they tell of a fight,
Of love that was fierce, and dreams taking flight.
In every wrinkle, a memory gleams,
The beauty of life, woven in seams.
So let time be a friend, as it shapes and it molds,
For every sweet story in these lines unfolds.
In the grace of each age, we find our own art,
Life's tender embrace, felt deep in each heart.

in the light

In shadows cast by doubt, our truths reside,
Once cloaked in whispers, masked by fleeting lies,
But now the veils of silence fall aside,
Revealing hearts where honesty hidden lies.

No longer shall our voices drown in shade,
For every word once hushed now finds its breath.
These tales we weave, no longer left to fade,
Exposes strength in facing fear and death.

Those lies that bound us break like fragile chains,
As clarity ignites each dawn's embrace.
In openness, we shed our past's refrains,
And step into the light, a vibrant space.

To no longer be belied is to reclaim,
Our rightful story, OURS; in truth's bright flame.

together with heavy hearts

We can't go on together with heavy hearts,
Yet we'll dance through the stormy weather with heavy hearts.

In shadows where secrets dwell, we'll tread,
Finding solace in the tether of heavy hearts.

Let's gather the memories, weave them in gold,
And mend the fragile tether with heavy hearts.

Through whispers of doubt, we'll rise and shine,
Chasing dreams we'll remember with heavy hearts.

Time's passage flows like a river's gentle grace,
Yet we'll cherish this forever with heavy hearts.

Each moment a treasure, each laugh a spark,
In the light of love's fervor with heavy hearts.

So here's to the journey, to paths intertwined,
And the stories we gather with heavy hearts.

In the end, We stand firm, where dreams intertwine,
Writing our truth together with heavy hearts.

Oktoberfest

In a town where the mugs overflow,
With laughter and dance in a row,
The beer flows like streams,
And all share their dreams,
As the autumn leaves flutter and glow.

A jolly old fellow named Fred,
Found a giant pretzel instead.
With a grin on his face,
He claimed first place,
In the feast where good cheer's widely spread!

Whispers of a Wandering Soul

A poem is the funeral pyre bright,
Of pulsations once exhumed from the deep,
Now still, yet present in the waning light;
Fueled by the flame of memories we keep.

A poet gathers thought and hope anew,
As golden hours paint the sky's embrace,
Where burnished hues in quietude imbue
The heart with echoes of a timeless grace.

Poetry, a dream in words unconfined,
Garbed in the hues of longing's soft caress,
With verses meandering, sweetly entwined,
A tapestry of whispered tenderness.

It takes but one soft whisper, light as air,
To free the wandering soul from despair.

untitled (autumn sijo)

In front of the koban, leaves swirl,
Star-B's crammed with cozy laughter,
Autumn's chill wraps us in warmth.

heavenly bodice

Beneath wide skies where dreams are spun at noon,
The stars align to hum a gentle tune.

In twilight's glow, the night will greet us soon,
While silver beams embrace the watching moon.

Each whisper shared becomes a treasured boon,
As hearts entwine, we find we crave for more.

In shadows deep, the weight of care can bore,
Yet in its depths, we find that love bears none.

In our quest for life, we enthrone the Sun.

Time to Live

In whispers soft, the dawn will break,
Embrace the light, let shadows flee,
With every breath, a chance to wake,
Life's fleeting dance, a gift to see.

The world awaits, a canvas wide,
In whispers soft, the dawn will break,
With open arms, we rise and ride,
With every breathe, a chance to wake.

Through trials faced, the victor's call,
Embrace the light, let shadows flee,
From dawn's first light to evening's fall,
Life's fleeting dance, a gift to see.

All Hallows? Eve (lullaby)

Upon the sea where dreams are hiding,
The fishermen's boat goes a-sailing,
Stars above the night are leading,
The lullaby of moon's gentle lowing.
Wynken nods as waves keep onward,
Blynken's eyes with sleep are weaving,
Nod with dreams, skies ever-wand'ring,
In slumber's realm, sparkly sprites enchanting,
Rest 'til dawn when harbour lights are nearing.

A Bridge Once Too Far

In the wreckage of trust,
we gather the fragments,
each shard a lesson,
each splinter a step toward light.

Let us speak the unspoken,
words hung like low clouds,
unraveling the knots of resentment,
finding courage in vulnerability.

With open hearts,
we can bridge the chasms,
threading honesty into our seams,
weaving new patterns from the old.

Forgiveness is a gentle river,
flowing through the cracks,
softening the edges of our wounds,
drawing us back to the shore.

Together, we can map a path
through the overgrowth,
reclaiming the thoroughfares
with kindness as our compass,
compassion as our guide.

In the distance, new bridges await,
bold and unyielding,
built on the promise of understanding,
on the hope that we are stronger
when we rise together,
turning the ruins of yesterday

into the foundation of tomorrow.

Dog-Tired Simplicity

Some things weigh more than verse, it's true,
Like a baby's cry or a dog's need to chew.
A kettle's loud whistle, talk shows that fight,
TikTok trends fading into the night.

Our days are a mix of both bright and the bland,
With meals that we savour and dawn's gentle hand.
Viral clips flicker, then quickly they fade,
Yet in simple moments, our memories are made.

Through ups and through downs, life's a wild ride,
With heartbeats and laughter right by our side.
In acts that are simple, our stories unfold,
With love in our lives, the best tales are told.

Keloidal Suspension

In the quiet ether, I dwell,
a keloidal suspension,
where pain lingers in a viscous fog,
each scar a droplet suspended,
clinging to the edges of memory,
a collage of hurt swirling
in an unseen current.

Fragments of trust, like colloids,
float between clarity and obscurity,
their weightless presence
taunts the boundaries of my soul,
each pulse a reminder?
the solidity of betrayal
muddles the light.

I hover in this liminal space,
adrift on currents of yesterday,
the heart a vessel of turbulent tides,
where shadows of what was
coalesce, refract, and disperse.
Is it healing or stagnation,
this dance of suspended hope?

Time blurs, an infinite liquid veil,
the world a distant echo,
while I, a particle in this brew,
witness the stirring depths,
watch as scars crystallize,
an intricate lattice of past and present,
perpetually in motion, yet never whole.

Here I float,
neither healed nor undone,
lost in the embrace of this strange soliloquy,
a symphony of unyielding echoes,
forever suspended in keloidal grace,
where healing is a dream
caught in the pull of your gravity's gaze.

One Such Day

If I could relive a single day,
It would be one wrapped in golden light,
The morning sun, a gentle ray,
Soft whispers in the air, pure delight.

With laughter filling the room,
The smell of coffee drifting near,
We'd wander streets where memories bloom,
Each moment crafted, precious and dear.

As twilight falls, we'd gather near,
Beneath the stars, with hopes laid bare,
That day, forever bright and clear,
A tapestry of love and care.

In every smile, our hearts have grown,
A day like this, I'd call my own.

The Beauty of a Kiss

In the softness of a lingering kiss,
Time stands still, hearts entwined and bright,
A moment held, a sweet, tender bliss,
In the softness of a lingering kiss,
Two souls collide, igniting the night,
Each breath a promise, a whispered wish,
In the softness of a lingering kiss,
Time stands still, hearts entwined and bright.

A place where you belong

In a realm where echoes softly weave,
Words become the map to where you roam,
A child of light, wielding dreams and power,
Each thought a heartbeat, every line a home,
Through time you journey, finding what you seek,
The essence of belonging, forever known.

Each tear-stained cheek, a moment's afterglow,
Reflecting paths where laughter once did grow,
Indelible in the heart's soft glow,
Memories alive, urging you to show,
To face the sunrise, bold steps on your way,
Knowing that in words, you truly thrive.

For unwritten lines leave shadows in the night,
But the truth you find in the dance of time,
Reveals the self, a soul's enduring light,
So lift your gaze, and embrace the climb,
In every echo, in the silence of thought,
You discover the place where you belong.

my daily dose of humanity

I know it's a bit lame, but here I stay,
Hoping for a nod, a word, some say.
Responses to my poems, thin but kind,
They bring a warmth, a solace to my mind.

In every comment, human touch I find,
A thread that weaves me closer to mankind.
It's not much, yet it keeps my spirit bright,
My daily dose of human touch each night.

Admonitions for a young or emerging poet

Young poet, heed these words, let wisdom guide,
Just keep writing, let your pen decide.
No matter what may come, keep words in flow,
Through highs and lows, let your passion show.

Interact with poets, near and far,
In their lines, you'll find your guiding star.
Rejections, they will come, do not dismay,
Embrace them, for they pave the writer's way.

Remember, not all drink from the same tea,
And you may find some don't resonate with thee.
Grow in your writing, skills and knowledge gain,
In every verse, let growth be your refrain.

Seek your joy within, let it bloom and grow,
Others' praise or scorn, let them come and go.
Take good critique to heart, and let it mend,
Discard the rest, let kindness be your friend.

Be gentle with yourself, and others too,
Keep eyes open, see the world anew.
Enjoy the writing process, struggles too,
For in each challenge, verse can grow anew.

Imagination's power, let it soar,
But know the line 'tween truth and more.
Ideals and fabrication, keep them clear,
In crafted lines, let honesty appear.

Remember, words like sacrifice and grace,
Humility, contentment in their place.

Gratitude and faith, and God above,
These are the cornerstones of writer's love.

So, young poet, with each word you pen,
Know you're part of a timeless, hallowed ken.
In every line, let truth and beauty blend,
And find your voice, your message to extend.

not quite forgotten

On this solemn day, we gather here,
Honouring those who faced their deepest fear.
Of sacrifices, humble, bold and true,
The dividends of their courage, aren't shy nor few.

In Flanders fields, where poppies blow,
The echoes of their valour, we stil know.
As Sassoon and Owen once did write,
Of youth and loss in the dimmest light.

"*The Soldier*" Brooke had penned with grace,
A vision of England in a foreign place.
Frederick Kesner, too, his verses share,
Of honour, hope, and unending care.

Bring it all in to view, the valour displayed,
The price they paid, the peace they laid.
Their memories live on, both near and far,
Guiding us like a steadfast star.

We stand in silence, heads bowed low,
For heroes who in battle's shadow go.
Their legacy, a beacon bright,
A reminder of their selfless fight.

For every freedom we hold dear,
Their spirits whisper, ever near.
On Remembrance Day, their stories rise,
With gratitude, we lift our eyes.

So let us keep their memory,
A testament to bravery.

For in their sacrifice, we find,
The strength to better humankind.

Potato Time Travel

Patrick's fascination with history drew him to Europe, to the Flanders region where echoes of the Great War linger. In the fields and paths, he traced the steps of soldiers, thoughts filled with his grandfather, a young 'digger' in those dark times.

In Julian's old farmhouse, Patrick found solace. The creaky attic a temporary home, the fields a canvas for reflection. Helping farmers, he felt the land's weight, history's whispers beneath every step.

One day, walking through the fields, a truck loaded with potatoes jolted, a few tumbling free. Patrick, with reverence, picked them up, stuffing them in his jacket. Julian questioned, "Why keep those bruised potatoes?"

Patrick replied, "It feels wrong to waste them, especially here. This land has seen so much." Julian nodded, the sentiment understood, if not fully grasped. They continued to the apple orchard, laughter and joy painting the afternoon.

At dinner, Patrick served the potatoes. Julian's mother smiled, shaking her head at the boy's sense of connection. "You have a wise soul," she said, her voice gentle. Patrick knew, in those simple actions, he honored the past.

In the attic's quiet, Patrick felt peace. His journey was more than history; it was understanding and respect. The land, scarred and nourished, held stories in every grain of soil, every bruise on a potato. Patrick paid tribute to those stories, finding his place in the vast tapestry of time.

A Flash of Gordon

On the 14th of November, Gordon sails away,
To the distant land of Australia, bound for Adelaide's bay.
With dreams of new horizons, beneath the southern sky,
He leaves behind old England, bidding the past goodbye.

The ship cuts through the waters, waves crash against its bow,
Gordon stands on deck, sporting a determined brow.
Adventure stirs within him, a poet's heart ablaze,
He faces the unknown future, with courage through the haze.

The rugged coast of Adelaide, calls him to its shore,
A land of vibrant beauty, ripe with tales and lore.
He breathes the air of freedom, beneath the sun's bright gleam,
His spirit soars with promise, his life a living dream.

In Australia's vast expanses, he finds his muse anew,
Its landscapes and its people, inspire all that he can do.
He pens the tales of bushmen, their struggles and their might,
His words a timeless echo, in the golden southern light.

Adam Lindsay Gordon, a poet of the land,
With every verse and stanza, he takes a noble stand.
On the 14th of November, he moved to make his mark,
In Adelaide's wide embrace, he found his poet's spark.

Through hardships and through triumphs, his legacy remains,
In Australia's very heart, his spirit still sustains.

For Gordon's journey eastward, was more than just a flight,
It was a quest for meaning, a beacon in the night.

When pets make your day

In the quiet hum of a mundane day,
A fluff-filled presence makes its way,
Soft fur, a comforting array,
My beloved pet, my heart's ballet.

Paws that patter, a rhythmic beat,
A tail that swishes in playful greet,
The day feels dull, the hours creep,
Yet here's a bond, so strong and sweet.

A brush of fur, a gentle nudge,
Whiskers twitch, and eyes that judge,
A visceral bond in this embrace,
In fur and love, we find our place.

In that moment, so stark and clear,
The world outside may disappear,
A shared breath, a quiet cheer,
In fuzzy touch, the world draws near.

With each caress, the mundane fades,
In fur's texture a fondness wades,
My day transformed, in simple ways,
By my pet's soft, hirsute displays.

Robbie and the Baroque Fiddle

In Tarbolton's hall, steps were taught,
Burns learned with grace, his heart yearning.
Gregg's skilled hands urged him to soar,
The fiddle's song guiding each move.

The Bachelor's Club became a place of cheer,
Burns and Gregg dedicated their time,
Refining steps and thoughts together,
In dance and music, their spirits intertwined.

From Alloway to Glasgow's stage,
The baroque fiddle carried timeless tales.
In New York's hall, its notes would soar,
Bringing an ageless dance to life again.

Burns' love for dance and music blossomed,
His world expanded with poetic views,
Each tune and step invigorated his spirit,
Enriching his soul with every verse he wrote.

Gregg's fiddle, a treasure from the past,
Held stories of history waiting to be told.
Played now in grand and bright venues,
It continues the legacy of those early days.

Pirates? Cove

Welcome mates to Pirate's Cove
Warm yourselves, come by the stove
Tell us now, your journeys bold;
Of maiden's fair and coins of gold.

Regale us with tales of distant lands,
Of battles fought on shifting sands,
Of treasure maps and secret caves,
Of briny seas and stormy waves.

Share the legends, both old and new,
Of gallant ships and loyal crew,
Of daring quests and danger near,
Raise your mugs, let's give a cheer!

For in this cove, where fires glow,
Among good friends, let stories flow.
With laughter loud and spirits high,
We'll dream beneath the starry sky.

a true marriage of minds

Poets traverse land and sea,
Exploring known reality.
In words exchanged, new dreams take flight,
Imagined realms ignite.

Dialogues unfold, thoughts expand,
Souls and words in gentle hands.
A marriage of minds begins to bloom,
Where dreams find room.

Thought and spirit intersect true,
Awareness melding in unified view.
Neural pulses share beats,
Harmony where thinking meets.

Together, poets carve ground,
In each other's verse, connections found.
World expands beyond finite space,
Minds and spirits face to face.

In this symphonic dance, our place,
Thought and spirit in timeless grace.
Marriage of minds, a sacred art,
Uniting consciousness, head and heart.

Archeology of Understanding

In the quiet aftermath, the word "quit" echoes,
A heavy silence in the corridors of memory.
A single word, a door to myriad pathways,
Each avenue intertwining, meandering through the fog.

Clues lie hidden in the shadows cast by our verses,
Fleeting glimpses of understanding,
Yet certainty eludes us, at every turn it seems:
Answers remain just out of reach.

We, the ones left behind, grasp at fragments,
Picking up the pieces, mending the void,
Trying to fill the space they once occupied,
Wrestling with the darkness they left

Is it a black hole we flee from, or one we warp through?
In this spiral of grief and questioning,
The future holds for us its secrets

Only time will reveal if we will find clarity or remain lost.

In these moments, we must carry on,
Walking paths both light and shadowed,
Seeking meaning in the echoes,
Finding strength in the act of continuing.

The pursuit of happiness, a delicate balance,
Not a guarantee but a quest,
In the face of despair, we persevere,
For in the journey, we find our strength.

Where do dreams flow?

We walk along magenta paths,
Where twilight coolness gently bathes our steps,
The laden vines, in clusters, hang low,
Teasing with a promise, sweet, yet sharp to taste,
In another's golden field,
Silken amber honey flows.

In memory's reverie, we trace the lines
Of Thomas Chatterton, whose fate entwines
With fleeting years and early twilight's end,
A poet's heart the shadows would transcend.

Born in Bristol's lanes, beneath grey skies' embrace,
Thomas wandered, with a poet's fragile grace.
Enamoured by old scripts in oak confined,
A spirit haunted by a fevered mind.

He fashioned verses in medieval guise,
A ploy that led to murmurs and surmise.
Rowley's name adorned his vibrant scrolls,
Yet youth and hunger carved unwelcome tolls.

Yet life unkind, in shadows, cast him low,
Amidst the sorrow, where dreams lay fallow.
Magenta paths now lead us through his plight,
Beyond despair, in fleeting twilight.

Cool seeps into the waning light,
A melancholic beauty, soft, yet bright.
In London's streets, where dreams turned sour,
Destitution's grip, tightened every hour.

A tender boy who sought acclaim through quill,
Found solace in the silence, shadows still.
Beneath the boughs, where sorrows intertwine,
Chatterton sought solace, brief respite.

His words, ripe for picking, turned bitter, dry,
Amidst neglect, where hope was left to die.
August winds whispered as his spirit broke,
A bottle of arsenic, despair's harsh yoke.

The world looked on, not knowing what they'd lost,
A poet's voice, now tethered to the cost.
In memory's shadow, we find the truth,
Of a young poet's bitter, fleeting youth.

In another's field, beyond despair,
Where life's harsh trials start to repair.
Silken amber honey flows so pure,
A testament to dreams that must endure.

Walk with him through twilight's bitter chill,
Where poets' hopes, in silence, linger still.
Magenta paths reveal the truth of strife,
Homeless youth with dreams of a better life.

Through words and whispers in the evening's glow,
Let Chatterton's lost voice gently show,
The way from destitution's dark embrace,
To fields of hope, where dreams find grace.

For every year, each moment's gentle beat,
Is a testament that life, though bittersweet,
Holds promise in the face of dire despair,
A gift to cherish, nurture, and repair.

Though Chatterton's young life met early dusk,

His legacy remains, beyond the husk.
A poignant reminder, stark and true,
Of lives unlived, and dreams that break anew.

From destitution's harsh and bitter trials,
We learn to walk with hope, through life's aisles,
Magenta paths where silken honey grows,
In fields of grace, where every dream still flows.

awakening (haiku cluster)

Chill spreads through the land,
Branches bare, skies hold their breath,
Snow's touch soon to come.

Frost whispers softly,
Bare earth awaits its white cloak,
Winter's gift unfolds.

In twilight's quiet,
Hope stirs with each frosty breath,
Snowfall's gentle kiss.

Trees reach silent arms,
Night's first flake drifts to the ground,
World awakens bright.

Hearts lift in stillness,
Snow's embrace brings tranquil glow,
Dim days find new light.

Pizza Fit for a Queen

In eighteen eighty-nine, on a sunny day,
Queen Margherita came to Naples Bay.
With King Umberto by her side,
She toured the city far and wide.

But little did the royal pair know,
A culinary delight awaited the show.
In a humble kitchen, Esposito prepped,
A pizza creation, over which he'd wept.

Green basil fresh, like the fields of spring,
White mozzarella, the joy it would bring.
Red ripe tomatoes, a vibrant delight,
On a golden crust, cooked just right.

The pizza, a vision of colors so grand,
Represented Italy, the beloved homeland.
Esposito presented, with pride in his eyes,
A dish to take the royals by surprise.

"Pizza Margherita," he proudly proclaimed,
For the queen, this masterpiece was named.
She took a bite, her eyes did gleam,
This pizza was more than a dream.

With a nod and a smile, she expressed her delight,
Pizza Margherita, the star of the night.
Word spread fast, from the court to the street,
Soon everyone wanted this delicious treat.

Thus began the journey, this pizza's rise,
From Naples' kitchens to the world's eyes.

A blend of simplicity and regal flair,
Pizza Margherita, beyond compare.

So next time you enjoy this classic delight,
Remember the queen's visit, that starry night.
For in each bite, history's taste does dwell,
A legacy of flavors, a tale to tell.

ashes from your urn

Ashen grey is the house of remembering.
Before each portal opens,
your faceless bard swoons.

He strikes a drum of bone and brittle whispers;
With cracked powd'ry fingers,
he inscribes your name in dust.

He etches it longer than it ever was,
the curves of your urn.
You gather there your ashes and nourish my soul.

?Play It Again, Sam?

In the dim glow of a smoky bar,
Echoes of memories drift near and far.
Notes from a piano, soft and grand,
Evoke the touch of a distant hand.

The melody weaves through the night's embrace,
Eyes meet and part in a fleeting chase.
Lost in the shadows of time's refrain,
Yearning to hear that song again.

"Play it, Sam, as time goes by,"
A whispered plea beneath the star-lit sky.
Through the haze of laughter and sighs,
Two lovers caught where destiny lies.

In a city where nights stretch long,
Haunted by echoes of a soulful song.
Rick and Ilsa, a timeless dance,
Bound by a fleeting, fragile chance.

As dialogues weave and memories blend,
A story of love that defies the end.
In every note and whispered prayer,
Their story lingers in the midnight air.

"Here's looking at you, kid," a final toast,
To the love that time tried to ghost.
Yet in each chord and silent tear,
Their song endures, forever near.

So play it again, Sam, don't refrain,
Let the music erase the pain.

In the notes, their love is found,
A symphony of hearts unbound.

near or far of love

All this who-ha about
Distance in relationships
But what of short-distance
Instead of long, or even
Point blank relationships!
Too much space, so-so-ho-hum,
And claustrophobic, let me get
A breathe, tight of chest and
Body parts gone to sleep
Only you can suffer as
Ants crawl on pins and needles;
While all along your love
Looks on with a hurt and
Quizzical look! So down it goes
You sink in a puddle of woes.
It really don't matter the distance
True love should always pull through.

ode to the broken dream

O dream, is this your quiet end we see,
With shadowy sheets that cover all we knew?
Dark, shining lips purse in final decree,
Pointy ears prick skyward, bidding adieu.

Corn stalks stand, pondering the night's last gleam,
Silent fields murmur, a soft, mournful sound,
In streams where bream lie belly-up, we dream,
Of days unbroken, where hope still is found.

Yet in your passing, dreams are not all lost,
For in the dawn, new visions softly tread,
And though we ponder what this night has cost,
We linger in the twilight, thoughts unfed.

O dream, though shadows mark your twilight call,
New dreams will rise, and we shall dream them all.

when the downpour ends

When the downpour ends,
In the barren wilderness-like moors,
The silence swells, fills the void,
A hushed breath over drenched earth.

Pick up the internal slack,
Bring about an emotional tension,
Face the day, the prospects of oncoming ones.
Emerge, soaked but whole.

Tears, the only external evidence,
Of having lived a life.
They fall, carving paths on skin,
Existence ceases, if only for a moment.

The fresh after-rain,
Brings a moist clarity,
Fills in the cracks,
Mends the broken places.

On the moors, the grass whispers,
Soft secrets of rebirth.
Each drop, a promise,
Each tear, a renewal.

The horizon stretches, endless,
Hope seeping into the soil.
From the downpour's end,

A new beginning, tender, fragile.

In the barren moors,
Life whispers softly,
In the language of rain,
And the silence it leaves behind.

mateship's duty of care

Though these rhymes wander, its lines lift,
Our bond withstands the Ages' shift.
In journeys long and years that sweep,
The lamp of kinship's light we keep.
Though words may falter, verses stray,
In every stanza, hearts convey
A bond unbroken, ever strong,
With love and reverence where we belong.
Through days of joy and nights of tears,
We've braved the doubts, subdued the fears.
Each rhyme may tremble, yet we find
Respect and love, a peace of mind.
Others may gaze, but cannot see
The depths of what you are to me.
Our trove, a secret, kept with care,
A treasure rare, beyond compare.
The lamp we hold, its flame so bright,
Guides us through the darkest night.
In rhymes that wander, hearts do speak
Of love and respect, steadfast, unique.
So let the world in wonder stare,
For only we this vault can share.
Through every verse, each line we weave,
In love and reverence, we still believe.

winter?s embrace

Snowflakes fall, a silent lullaby,
Blankets of white beneath twilight sky,
Bare branches etched in frost's sigh,
Cold winds weave through the night,
Stars alight, crisp and bright,
Warm fireside light,
Frozen plight,
Deep night,
Still.

Boy and Bonnet

Among the blossoms, bright and wide,
A boy walks by his mother's side,
In his small hands, a bonnet light,
To crown her head with spring's delight.

She smiles as he adjusts the bow,
Her eyes aglow with love's soft glow,
In every thread and woven part,
A son's devotion, mother's heart.

a.c.r.o.n.y.m.s.

**Alphabet soup, a tangled blend,
Conveying meanings end to end.
Representing words so clear,
Orders concise, bringing cheer.
Nuanced notions packed so tight,
Yearning for brevity's delight.
Manifest in every field,
S**ecrets in their shorthand revealed.**

where I could no longer go home

That hamlet where mum's lineage dwells, Ancestral ruins, where silence swells. Foundation stumps, a faint design, A phenomenon strange, yet mine. History breathes in broken stone, Family lore in whispers grown. Sights and sounds, scents of old, Stories in these ruins unfold. But in this decay, a shadow's cast, A reminder of life that cannot last. Bulldozed, ground, swept away, Mortality's echo, can't win that day. So for now all I could do is roam away from where I couldn't go home.

tango of us

Through the politics of dancing,
In every step, bonds advancing.
From acquaintance to a lover's dream,
In rhythm's hold, we're caught in between.

The mind, a skeptic, slow to sway,
Yet hearts in unison lead the way.
With every touch, and every glance,
We've to master this complex dance.

In moments fleeting, passion burns,
The heart, relentless, forever yearns.
A tango fierce, of mind and soul,
So two-together, we become whole.

home is where the heart beats

Home, where peace and noise collide,
A sanctuary yet hard to abide.
In an unforgiving world, it's known,
But even there, I'm not alone.
Where else do I go... but home.

Hidden Garden (reverse nonet)

Calm.
Pure peace,
Hearts find ease,
Moonlit moments cease,
Dew-kissed dreams gently tease,
Mystic scents drift in the breeze,
Emerald leaves rustle and sway,
Whispers of secrets in petals lay,
Quietly blooms, where shadows softly play.

The Quiet Conqueror

Lichen, you are the quiet conqueror, Settling where others cannot, On barren rock and ancient trees, You weave your tapestry. In shades of green and gray, You whisper the language of time, Slowly, subtly, transforming, The places you call home. You thrive in stillness, In the patience of centuries, A symbiosis of life, In the most unlikely places. In your intricate forms, We see resilience, A testament to survival, Against the harshest of odds. You do not boast, You do not cry for attention, Yet in your quiet existence, You teach us the power of perseverance.

a makar's legacy

In the lands of heather and mist,
In the hands of the makar,
In the songs of the hills,
From lochs to highlands,

Words become landscapes,
And the whispers of the rivers,
Echoes of history blend with the present,
Painted with the hues of emotion,

The makar finds his muse,
In verses crafted with care,
Each line a brushstroke of life,
From the ancient sagas,

To the pulse of modern streets,
He weaves the threads of time,
Each word a testament,
To the beauty and struggle of the land,

His verses bridge the divide,
In the essence of Scotland's grace,
Between past and future realms,
An ode to Scotland's heart,

He battles the silence,
From the rugged coastlines,
With the pen as his sword,
In the makar's timeless song,

To the bustling towns,
Filling the air with music,

His words are the heartbeat,
Through the valleys and the glens,

A storyteller of the land,
The makar's role,
A beacon of wisdom,
His voice carries the spirit,

Of every season, every change,
Guiding the hearts of many,
A bridge across time,
Of a nation's soul,

The legacy of the makar,
Resonating through the ages,
Uniting the spirit of Scotland,
In verses that never age.

life's no faerie tale

From doubt to triumph, she ascends,
She walks a path where dreams transcend.
Against the odds, she builds her day,
In every step, she carves away.
Though voices told her she would fail,
Yet in her heart, she sets each sail.
With each new change, a life reborn,
A faerie tale, through night to morn.

where is home?

a sail without its wind
prevailing
 and oars without waters
deep
 within heaving chest
spraying cheeks moist

unlikely treasures

Discarded thoughts collide,
cast aside once too many times;
now stride across crumpled sheets,
from creative springs that rise,
fuelling the pen and paper set alight.

Ideas once buried, now burst forth:

a battered note, a torn-out page,
exploding in fervent rage... each
critic's stab, each cut so deep,
pickaxes unearthing jewels, rough
but each one worth their keep.

Glimmer of Frost

My experience with silver and gold,
Just a sliver, so cold.

Der Winter ist kalt,

Where the wealth of winter glows,
A glimmer of frost,

In a landscape of frozen dreams:

Treasures sparkle under the frost,
Promises turn to ice,
In the heart of cold wealth,
Leaving a touchless beauty,
An allure that chills to the core.

The Silent Herald

With pen in hand
I become a silent herald
Channeling voices long forgotten

And stories left unsaid

Through the guise of another
I bring forth light
Of hidden truths

And the darkness bred

Of oft buried fears.
In these silent spaces
My true voice is birthed.

a moment in between

In the breath before an answer,
in the space between steps,
there lies the essence of wandering.

No map can trace the heart's journey,
no compass needle can point true north.
It is the pulse of the unknown

that truly drives the quest?
neither seeking its end,
nor the beginning, but simply to be.

The questions of "why" and "where"
dissolve in the distant horizons
leaving only the hushed tones of "now."

season's jailbreak

The farm erupts as dusk settles.
Turkeys, driven by an instinctual urge,
burst from their pen.
Farmers rush, voices rising above the clamour.

The scent of freedom fills the air as wings flap wildly.
This annual chaos, a dance of survival
unfolds in the glow of a fading sun.

The escape is frantic, desperate.
For a singular moment

turkeys taste liberation, unaware of the stakes.

autumn chofu

Under the golden boughs of ancient trees,
autumn sighs, as leaves
descend
in a swirling, endless ballet,
The earth receives them
with a gentle embrace,
withering compost pile.

searching for a season

The music we shared was more than mere notes,
And the bread we broke held more than sustenance;
Now in your absence, a void remains,
The beauty that once adorned my world has withered.

Your touch graced the surfaces we frequented,
And your hands held these vessels with grace.
These objects, devoid of memory, stand silent,
Yet your essence lingers, an invisible presence.

In my heart, you walked among these familiar things,
Imbuing them with your light, your gentle touch;
In my heart, their echoes remain, a testament
To the time they knew you, wise and beautiful.

poetic persona

I wear a thousand faces,
Each one a reflection
Of a different world,
A different truth.

One speaks of sorrow,
Another of joy,
Yet all are me,
And none are me,

A kaleidoscope of voices,
In the tapestry of my mind.

love unspoken

Yesterday,
a tear caught the sun, whole
and rolled down your cheek
as we drove along the M31.

Transfixed
in that moment, now etched
in my mind; immortalised in my heart,
sealed in memory, that tenderest of trysts;

our secret.
You bared your deepest groanings,
mourning your greatest loss
this side of heaven.

As I wiped the wetness from your face
with my fingertips,
I could be no nearer to you,
offering devout friendship.

Caught in that moment,
what strangeness it is
to have little else to give
other than being by your side,
always.

No wise words to speak,
no comfort for unworded dissolution,
but to keep a steady hand on the wheel
toward the rest of our lives...
and drive

The music blaring,
our chests heaving;
*Why is it that when your friend's heart breaks,
your heart breaks along?*

The horizon receding, re-emerging,
until I pull the handbrake
in front of your house,
and stop.

21-12-24

internal countdown begins
like ants to freshly landed
sugar crystal
like sunflower to rising sun
peeping from cover
like expectant pyjama'd tyke
on Christmas morn
a feeling, full grown or so,
but couldn't quite shake

drunken suspension bridge

Mess with this heart, you always do,
Oblivious to the love that's true.
Swagger in, head askew,
Slurring, "I lurv you, I lurv you."

Why burden this heart with sober disdain,
Hardly meeting my gaze, causing pain.
Tongue-tied, no touch, lopsided smile,
Leaving me longing all the while.

Wake up, see beyond the cans and sway,
There's so much more to us, every day.
Beneath your aloof façade, I see,
The potential for love that's meant to be.

Cast off the chains of inebriation,
Embrace the depth of real sensation.
For in the wake of your sober eyes,
A love unspoken, ready to rise.

catch of the day

Every dawn, he rows his boat into the mist,
the horizon a thin line _____, barely visible.
He casts his net , an extension of his will
into depths that whisper of hidden treasures.
Today, the net pulls heavy,
a catch that promises sustenance.
He feels the strain in his muscles,
the reward of effort in his hands.
Fish gleam in the morning light,
each one a small victory.
Returning to shore,
he lays the catch on the dock;
a testament to a night's work
 ...a day's promise.
Each fish tells a story
of survival and skill,
 ...a dialogue
between man and ocean.

(without title)

Galaxies argue, expansion quickens,
Hubble's tension persists
 ...distances debated.

Black holes dance sideways
gravity's pull defied; space bends
reality warps;
 ...cosmic ballet in motion.

A pair of stars entwined in light:
faces tense , cosmic forces at play.

Christmas Glow

At eventide, lights twinkle
in the cold night, families gather
the warmth of home envelops.

Children's laughter echoes through the halls
gifts placed beneath the evergreen sentinel.
The table set, a feast awaits

rich aromas of roasted meats and spiced wine.
Faces aglow with anticipation
stories shared, traditions honoured.

In this moment, love's essence crystallises
the spirit of giving, a tangible presence
binding hearts in unspoken harmony.

through the eyes of a stranger

Through the eyes of a stranger,
I walk the crowded streets,
My thoughts hidden behind
A façade of indifference.
Always writing under breath
Each step the rhythm of a song

I listen for the murmurs,
The stories left half-told,
And with borrowed breath,
I weave their words into verse,
A silent chronicler,
Of lives intertwined.

Beneath the surface of each face,
A universe of fears and farce
Their hopes and sorrows,
Echoing in its urbane hum.

Children's laughter mingles with
The weight of grown up burdens,
A symphony of our joint existence
Playing in the back alleys and boulevards.

Each encounter, a fleeting moment,
A glance, a gesture, a whispered word,
Adding threads to each tapestry,
Of a city alive with unshod tales.

In the café corners, secrets whispered,
Lovers' quarrels, and reconciliations,
The elderly, reminiscing about days gone by,

Youth, restless and yearning for the future.

I am the observer, an unseen poet,
Capturing the essence of humanity,
Turning the ordinary into the extraordinary,
Through the alchemy of language and empathy.

With every step, I absorb their essence,
Their laughter, their pain, their resilience.
Through their eyes, I see a world
All at once bright and chaotic
Vibrant with color and complexity,
A dance of life in constant motion.

As the day wanes and the streets quiet,
I carry their stories with me,
Then transmuting into verse,
A testament to the beauty and fragility
Of human connection, disconnection
Seen through the eyes of a stranger.

under pressure

Doubt settles like a creeping mist
clouding judgments, turning paths uncertain.
In its shadow, anger ignites
a wildfire consuming calm
its heat searing every thought.

Guilt stands vigilant, a sentinel of past deeds
binding the heart with heavy links
its weight a relentless reminder.
Grief walks beside, a silent companion
its presence a heavy fog
changing the landscape of the soul.

Shame cloaks itself in invisibility
a critic whispering in hushed tones
distorting reflections with harsh judgments.
Under life's pressure, we navigate
seeking light in the brume of doubt
finding resilience in the wildfire of anger.

We unshackle from Guilt's chains
embrace the silent walks with grief
and step into the light
casting off the shroud of shame
transforming under pressure
becoming stronger, shining bright.

grappling with Today

What we do with each new day
How we greet the dawn
Shapes the contours of our existence.

With each step, we carve paths
Paths that weave through the fabric of time
Bringing forth the innocence of yesterday
Allowing us to dwell in the present

A present that embraces us with gentle arms.
Tomorrows loom on the horizon
Uncertain yet promising.
We approach with hope
A hope grounded in the lessons of the past.

In each moment, we find our strength
A strength born from the desire
To grapple with the reality of life
To accept its trials and cherish its beauty.
In this dance of days
We become the architects of our fate

Crafting a life that holds value
A life that finds peace in the present
A life that understands
The profound truth of being.

third wheel

That proverbial "third wheel" syndrome
a companion in solitude
haunts the poet's heart
- a feeling that clings like shadows
 ...never quite shaken off.

In crowded spaces, they feel distant
a shaman stepping back from the scene
a witness to love's tender embrace
while longing stirs like the wind.

With each verse penned, they mark the ache
attempting to erase the alienation
 finding solace in ink
crafting lines that bind their solitude
transforming isolation into art.

But in the quiet of the night
a realisation dawns, unexpected:
solitude, once a shadow, becomes a sanctuary.

In the stillness, strength emerges
an epiphany: the poet finds
contentment in their own company
discovering unique paths for a third wheel to trek.

elemental forge

silence after rain,
moors unveil rebirth softly,
tears of renewal.

flickering firelight,
dreams dance in ashes aglow,
bushfire lessons burn.

veined stone in wind's gale,
shapes dance, bound'ries fade, souls merge,
created within

these are the days

There are days
when songs are stifled
on a weary and hoarse throat.
Notes no longer glide softly -
raking leaves strewn across
a barely littered lawn;
their butterfly wings
hung up in the wait
for another sunny day.

There are nights
that stars squander
their luminescence
on unappreciative lovers
roaming listlessly by
on a moonlit shore
their brilliant points
curl up in vain hope
of another cloudless night.

There are mornings
that sizzle on the stove
that sparkle sweet tangy-ness
hands clasping across the table
reliving life's love-filled moments
a warmth in the kitchen
reflects fervent esteem
done up in various colours
for each new morning.

2025

In the still of night,
 . . . a voice
becomes Dawn's first light

Where every shadow meets its end
Reverie ascends skyward:
a final page turned
, weary lines
of hope, once written
 now unwind

Until this day comes
, we seek our peace

Never again lost
 . . . in darkened sleep.

spaces we inhabit: mornings

In the morning light
we gather at the square
voices mingling
plans unfolding
 .?.?.? a tapestry of lives
undulating in confettied sun

in candescent ascent

Hermitage wraps around him
a shimmering cloak of quiet light.
he meditates in candescent stillness
finding centredness within its glow
a candelabra's incandescent silence.

His variegated thoughts
a stream of luminescence
flow gently through his mind
each moment, each breath aflame.

In cadences of tranquility
he discovers the serenity of self
each thought a note of calm
each breath a placid soliloquy.

read to your satisfaction

Take that bold step up to my words
linger until they have had their fill
each party imbuing the other
overflowing with the permeate of life.
Read to your satisfaction, but read:
free your mind upon these winged lines
and read to your absolute satisfaction!

Immerse yourself in a tapestry of thoughts
each thread revealing a new pattern
weaving complexity into your consciousness.
Let the current of insight pull you in
drawing you away from the mundane
into a river of boundless meaning.

Traverse the maze of ideas
where every turn unveils a fresh perspective
a hidden treasure waiting to be discovered.
Navigate the halls of contemplation
guided by curiosity's compass
unlocking gates to new realms of understanding.

Engage in the dance of words and emotions
each movement in sync with your heartbeat
a rhythm resonating deep within your soul.
Feel the surge of inspiration flood through you
sparks flying into vivid, living art
thoughts transformed into creations.

Let the symphony of language embrace you
each note striking a resonant chord
a blend of intellect and passion.
Allow the harmonies of wisdom
and insight to echo in your mind
filling the silence with profound resonance.

Yes, step up to my words, boldly
linger until they have had their fill
each party imbuing the other
overflowing with the essence of life.
Read to your satisfaction, but read:
free your mind upon these winged lines
and read to your absolute satisfaction!

here and there

What's a decade here and there? Perhaps a lot if you're past 50. People live longer these days, so a spritely 70 is meant to be acceptable, looked forward to. If you get past the wrinkles and the short term memory loss remember to share your secret- youth's fountain is found in both - the realm of heart and mind. Peace with self and adjusted life goals gather round like-minded spirits bring to the table what's available banish from thought what's undesirable. What's a decade here and there?

A Seamstress's Courage

Under the towering shadow of the guillotine
the air thick with dread and whispered prayers
a young seamstress stands, trembling yet resolute.
She peers through the iron bars, eyes wide
seeing the relentless crowd, faces masked with rage and glee.

The Revolutionary Tribunal roars its final verdict
echoing through the square, a grim symphony of justice and wrath.
Beside her, Sydney Carton, dishevelled yet calm,
his eyes meeting hers with a tender, reassuring gaze.
In his presence, she finds a sliver of comfort
a connection forged in the crucible of fate.

As they await their fate, the drumbeats grow louder
a relentless countdown to the final act.
The seamstress recalls her life in fragments
the needle's dance through fabric
the whispers of Parisian streets
now silenced by the Revolution's roar.

Carton, his heart heavy with unspoken love
sees in her eyes a mirror of his own redemption.
He speaks softly, his voice a balm to her fear
*"Remember, our lives are more than this moment,
we endure in the hearts of those we leave behind."*

The crowd surges, a sea of fervour and fanaticism
their cries merging with the drumbeats
a cacophony of hope and despair.

The seamstress grips Carton's hand
drawing strength from his quiet courage.

The scaffold, a dark spectre, looms ever closer
each step a heartbeat, a pulse in the silence.
She glances at the sky, a canvas of grey
and imagines the stars beyond, unseen but constant.
Her breath catches, a fleeting tremor
but her resolve steels, her spirit unyielding.

In her final moments, she stands tall
her bravery a beacon in the encroaching darkness.
The blade gleams, poised for its descent
but within her heart, a defiant flame burns bright.

Their shared fate, a monument to the enduring human spirit
resoluteness carved in the face of oblivion.
Even as the blade falls, her courage resonates
a poignant echo in the annals of time.

~ Nov.-Dec. 2024

tarkovsky-esque

flames and mirrors flash
windows and rain, pan on screen
reflective pools, still

lines, l o n g d r a w l n g gaze
light, topographic texture
shade; toxic mixture

ambient perspective
people together, alone
all moving me home

tears you could have cried

Picking up the internal slack, invoking an inward tension that emboldens one to face the day and the prospects of oncoming ones. Wet cheeks reveal visible cues, flipping calendars, leaf upon leaf:
... existing surrenders, like a sparkled after-rain, bringing a moist crystalline relief
that fills the cracks and mends the broken places.

a grasp away

A figure, stern and cold,
receives a laurel leaf with surprise.
No introduction, no warmth exchanged
 . . . just the reality of presence
 the edge of diffidence . . .

The leaf, tender and green
rests lightly in their hand
a symbol of honour, unspoken worth.
In its quiet embrace,
 a connection begins to form;
bridging the divide of understanding.

The caustic words, the guarded heart,
begin to soften in the face of one gesture.
The laurel invites a new beginning,
a chance to be seen, to be known
beyond the barriers of silence.

reflection by the sea

We stand at the shore's edge, gazing at the sea.
The horizon stretches before us, unhindered.
Your eyes hold the wisdom of the tides.
Your words bring the calm where truth resides.

The ocean's song provides a gentle lull.
In its waves, our bond grows ever strong.
We speak of dreams, of hopes, and fears,
Remembering incandescence of boundless years.

As the sun sets on that distant line,
I recognise you near as a precious gift.
In every wave, I see your strength,
Awash in the light of a newly born star.

spaces we inhabit: with every breath

We build our lives within these walls:

from homes to parks to markets;

every brick, every tree, every street

holds the echoes of our presence

- the imprints of our daily lives.

We are the community:

shaping and being shaped

by the spaces we inhabit;

our interactions, our shared moments

create a dynamic tapestry

rich with diversity

woven with care.

In each greeting, each smile

we find connection;

in each shared space, a sense of belonging.

We are stronger together;

our community buoyant and indomitable -

the spaces we inhabit

alive with our spirit.

the lighthouse keeper's watch

On a rugged cliff
the lighthouse stands
a beacon of hope in the storm
its light cutting through the darkness
guiding ships to safer waters.

The keeper tends the flame with care
a solitary watch in the night
his only companions the stars above
and the crashing waves below.

In the stillness
he listens to the sea
its endless whispering of secrets
a timeless conversation with the shore
a dance of light and shadow.

once there was a boy

The echoes of laughter fade,
hushed whispers of a time when
innocence wove through our days
fragile threads now unraveling.

A boy stands by the edge of the river
 eyes wide with wonder
tracing the ripples that dance
beneath the setting sun.
The world felt endless then
 each stone a treasure
 each tree a fortress.

He built dreams in the sand
fortresses of imagination
only to watch them crumble
beneath the relentless tide.
 The waves took his castles
and with them, pieces of his youth.

The seasons changed
leaves turned to gold and fell
blanketing the ground
with remnants of yesterday.
In the quiet moments
he searched for the boy
 he used to be
finding only shadows
and echoes of forgotten laughter.

Grief settled like morning mist
 dense and inescapable

clouding the paths he once walked
with carefree abandon.

The weight of loss
pressed against his chest
each breath a reminder
of what was no more.

He sees the world through different eyes
scars etched into his soul
a testament to battles fought
and innocence lost.
The boyhood dreams lie buried
beneath the soil of reality
where they whisper of what could have been.

In the stillness of twilight
he mourns the boy he left behind
the one who believed
in endless summers and unbroken promises.
The man stands alone
bearing the burden of knowledge
yet cherishing the fragments
of a past that shaped him.

This is the death of boyhood
a solemn rite of passage
where innocence fades
and grief fills the void.
But within the sorrow,
there lies a quiet strength
a resilience born of loss
and a heart that still remembers
. . . how to dream.

Help! There's a dragon in my stew!

A dragon basks in my stew, scales glinting with heat
Steam curls, weaving tales of daring quests
Potatoes anchor islands, thickening the plot
Carrots float like tiny boats on a spicy sea
Pepper flames flicker, igniting bold flavours
Onions create layers of intrigue
Garlic breathes magic
Stew simmers bold.

Spoon stirs, dragon flares
Bubbles pop with mystery
Savoury secrets blend-
Courage takes a bite.

Spoon dips,
Bowl lifts.

Savour.

spaces we inhabit: pre-dystopian reverie

The coffee shop hums with life
conversations weaving through the air
baristas calling out names
steam rising from cups
the warmth of community
filling the space.
Children play in the park
laughter ringing out
a symphony of joy
amidst the trees and swings.
Parents watch, exchanging smiles
the unspoken bond
of shared responsibility.
At the market, vendors set up stalls
fruits and vegetables arranged with care
shoppers wander through aisles
seeking fresh produce and familiar faces.
Greetings are exchanged, stories shared
each interaction a thread
in the fabric of the community.
In the evening, lights flicker on
homes glow with warmth
families gather around tables
sharing meals and moments.
Neighbours wave from porches
the quiet acknowledgment
of belonging.
These spaces we inhabit,
from bustling streets to quiet corners
shape us and are shaped by us
dynamic and ever-changing
built on the foundation

of our connections
the community we nurture together.

time?s no friend

coiled, helical -seemingly fickle
...yet ever objective...

an unhurried force
that makes no offers
...nor demands.

What value we give it
is misused and/or abused
. . . by all subject to it!

CTRL + ALT + DLT

Have we found what eases pain, it shan't remain;
yet hardly a memory lingers that might untether,
should even that be erased, p'raps a wound reopens-
it's angry eye emboldens a spectrum of jumbled feelings:
tangible only in laconic holds we cannot hope to break.

bicnic py the sea

bailing soat happily out to sea
glailing foat eating up my tea
So wherever it is that I may be
a goating boat is a sight to see!

new day

Bring on kintsugi
In the night's cathedral hour
New life starts at dawn

Edgar Allan : Ravenous Poe, 216 years on

In a darkened chamber
shadows twist and writhe
Pale light spills through cracked panes
illuminating dust motes
The air, thick with the scent of age and decay
A raven, black as a void,
perches on the windowsill
Its eyes, piercing, stare into the soul
Murmurs of lost hopes and unfulfilled
dreams linger in the corners
Quill in hand, he writes feverishly
Ink, like blood, stains the parchment
with thoughts
Driven by an insatiable
hunger for the macabre
Loneliness clings to him,
a relentless spectre
Tormented by visions of the departed
He seeks consolation in the written word,
an eternal struggle
Haunted by silence, he listens
To groanings of the damned
and reverberating sorrows
He captures their essence,
binding them in prose
His heart, a labyrinth of grief and longing
Beats with a melancholy cadence
He exists in liminal spaces
between life and death
In the end,
he remains
A solitary figure,

surrounded by the phantoms of his creation
Eternally bound to the darkness,
a poet of the night.

looking glass

does breaking mirrors
really alter my features?
looking glass-cripple

not for lack of trying

Through Twilight's dreams, and Dawn's first light,
a palpitating pursuit chases after thought;
In shadows, cats with whispering whiskers bridge,
unseen efforts scatter, a flight of starlings.

Memories clutch at slender threads,
of moments missed, words left unspoken;
Cryptic lines weave through winding tales,
of love pursued, curtailed by time.

Paths intertwine but never fully cross,
faint whispers linger, echoing past desires;
In the breach, a wearying chase,
not for lack of trying, but elusive fortune.

Closing days bring dusk's tenuous repose,
in shattered hopes and forsaken striving;
we find comfort in their steadfast hold,
not for lack of trying, but of ill return.

don?t know

Don't know what to say
anymore

my mental defragmentation
distills my thoughts
cremated and wind scattered
water tension propelled
pond-gliding chase scenes
surrealistic ballet

Don't know what to think
anymore

mince meat re-minced
mindless in Seattle
shuttling to and fro
Brownian movements
my emotional upheaval
seat-belted turbulence

Don't know what to feel
anymore

economic extravagance
eclectic expediting
bovine ruminations
atop verdant berms
pates bare through seasons
lawless diminishing returns

star signed

somewhere overhead
the smaller bear sits:
my constant companion

whose trajectory lights up
carries forward my story arc
brings us our own constellation

an evolving presence

In the flow of days and nights,
awareness intertwines with time,
each moment birthed anew.

Full consciousness breathes
within the heartbeat of change,
not separate, but entwined with life's pulse.

The truth ignites not a fire,
but a gentle dawn,
easing shadows into light.

Presence is not static,
but dances with each breath,
each blink of an eye.

Wisdom arises not from
silent knowing alone,
but from the Symphony of lived experience,
from our stories and scars.

The view is not timeless,
but ever-evolving,
as the river of life flows,
we flow along within it.

fleet-footed good

And as you walk through these familiar streets,
You notice small details you used to overlook:
The worn-out benches where people rest,

The graffiti that boldly splashes stories;
The fleeting smiles of passing strangers...
Each moment feels so much more precious-

Each breath a gift, not to be taken for granted.
You accept that endings are part of the journey;
Finding a truth that keeps you moving forward.

into the arms of night

Embrace the evening, let it wrap you
in its gentle whisper, softly gilding
each breath towards a tranquil rest.

Welcome the night, with open heart,
accept its peace, its quiet song,
for life's dance needs both light and shadow.

Surrender, not in defeat, but in grace,
allowing the natural flow of time
to cradle your spirit with tender hands.

The stars don't resist their twilight,
nor does the moon fight its fade.

In the stillness of this night,
find a beauty in release,
the serenity of surrender,
as the world pauses to breathe.

Bathe in the calm of dusk,
the soft embrace of nightfall,
and let go, with gentle acceptance,
into the welcoming arms of sleep.

bully-free

Now you understand how beneath the layers
Bullies wrap their pain in a shroud of spite,
Their anger is a wildfire masking a burning wound.

And you, bearing your own silent wounds,
Learn to see beyond the jeers and sneers,
You stand unwavering, not just a target.

Finding true strength in empathy,
A quiet power in your gentle heart,
As you walk through the halls:

The echoes of taunts fade away,
Replaced by a sense of resolve,
A determination to rise above;

To be more than their words,
To break free from the shadows,
And finally let your spirit soar.

bridge is out

In the shadow that our hearts cast,
hatred blooms, a stubborn weed
where once grew a garden of trust.

Words, once tender,
shatter like glass,
a bridge collapsing under weight,
echoes of apologies
falling into silent abyss.

We deceive ourselves,
clutching memories like
fragments of a broken mirror,
forgetting the faces we wore,
the warmth that once held us close,
burying the past
in shallow graves.

A vast network unfurls,
a circuitry of disconnection,
new bridges rise on the horizon,
but the arteries lie severed,
thoroughfares overgrown,
forgotten paths leading nowhere.

We navigate this labyrinth,
the ghosts of what was,
whispering in the dark,
sagely reminding us
that healing is a slow tide,
and that some wounds
will never truly mend.

not to the swift

They cling to the weight of their quill,
the tactile sensation, grounding them,
yet, the digital tide pulls at their resolve,
urging them to adapt or be left behind.

Nostalgia blooms in the scent of old books,
memories of applause, now distant echoes,
the poet's dilemma, a struggle within,
to honour tradition or embrace the new.

Their heart aches for the simplicity lost,
the intimate connection with each verse,
yet, the rapid pace of today precludes,
the quiet reflection their soul craves.

With a sigh, they dip their thirsty pen
once more, a solitary battle against time's rush,
knowing their legacy is not in speed,
but in the depth and soul of every word.

Speak to them

Speak to them
of heart
a force of
maniacal wit
restrict no
words

view them
pining for
lost, mislaid
trust until
worth
renews

hear them
concoct
plumes rising
ladle lilt
ribald
viscosity

where time stood still

Beneath the canopy, shadows play on stone,
The lychgate stands, a sentinel of time gone by.
Generations passed through here, heads bowed,
In sorrow and remembrance, in the stillness of loss.

The wind tells stories of those who walked under its arch,
Carrying burdens heavier than the coffins they bore.
Now, it stands alone, a relic of rituals forgotten,
Its timbers groan with age, but they endure,
Holding secrets of silent goodbyes and unspoken prayers.

Nature reclaims what was once hers,
Moss spreads like a quiet rebellion,
Vines twist and curl, binding the past to the present.

But still, the lychgate stands,
A testament to what remains when all else moves on,
A place where the living met the dead,
And time stood still, if only for a moment.

sound of a day, precluded

Today refuses to break its silence.
Dawn holds its breath; the first rays
glisten on dew, a crisp scent of morning air,
holding back the chorus of waking sounds.

The rooster paces, crow stifled;
the air remains hushed.
You step outside, feeling the cold bite of frost,
feet crunching on ice, each step a muted echo.
Yesterday's shadows cling, hesitant to retreat,
the world awaits the usual morning clamour.

Neighbours stir behind drawn curtains,
a kettle hisses, the clink of a spoon,
all sounds folded back into the quiet.
The day resists, embracing its calm.

Birds perch, waiting for the signal,
the city stands poised, engines dormant.
You breathe in the crisp air,
a moment of peace, where silence reigns.

But anticipation builds within,
a pulse, a single note,
ready to erupt and shatter the stillness.

The sound of a day, precluded,
yet to burst forth, yet to come alive.

untitled 575 (feathered frolick)

birds chitter chatter
perched high upon tension wires
cable party-line

feathers brush the sky
sweet chirps' rising crescendo
Nature's melody

Sunrise paints the dawn
wispy salutations call
chirpy morning song

winds sway gentle boughs
feathery motion signals
Sky-bound semaphore

point of contact

.

It may be dark;
but tonight
effervescent lights dance
to a blaring par-tay tune

while in the shadows, we parlay...

reach over me
and flick the switch;
let bokeh find clarity
in our fervent embrace.

.

along legacy way

In the scatter of fleeting moments,
where thoughts lean like sunflowers,
they drift their scent in the breeze
carrying with them slivered visions.

Adjusting to the light,
bending toward clarity?
steel-hooded dreams,
forged in the fires of youth.

The after-sweat of existence lingers,
glistening on the surface of reality.
Questions pool like dew on metal,
each droplet a possibility, a pondered future.

In the quiet woods of introspection,
we find the echoes of what could have been.
A legacy in each soliloquy,
of the journeys taken, the paths crossed.

Not meant for casual talks in cafes,
nor the noise of polarized voices.
But for the raw, unfiltered footage of life,
and pictures that capture a trajectory, a purpose.

What becomes of these moments,
when morning's light brings new revelations,
and yesterday's plans dissolve like sugar in coffee?
The anticipation of rum-soaked evenings, lost to the sands of time.

In the suburbs, news heralds the day,
a backdrop for our rehearsed consciousness.

Where memories of childhood years,
landscape the stories we carry within.

poetspeak

a poem is the funeral pyre
of pulsations, once exhumed
but now still present;
fueled by the flame of our
rue-filled memories
a poet is the gathering together
of thought and hope
that intermingle with the
burnished trim of
a late afternoon sky
and poetry is a dream
garbed in bilious words
whose raiment is laced
by meandering verse and
be-jeweled by barely parted lips:
It takes but a whisper
to free the wandering soul.

they shall weep no more

We were walking today
for our daily constitutional
and a lady and her dog
were walking toward us
from the opposite direction.

We smiled, they smiled, and
we all walked our trajectories.
After making our first loop
we met up with them again,
this time with much friendlier,
more companionable smiles.
I mentioned a few moments later
how nice it was for the lady
not to be alone in her walk and
that I could be the dog in our situation.

So she reaches for my collar
and I began to woof, then
she mentions how she loves
to see the willows swaying
happily in the breeze, that
they don't seem to be crying any longer.

piecemeal

In fragments, I find you,
piece by piece,
each shard a story,
a glimpse through the cracks.

Moments drift,
unanchored,
and I catch only slivers,
glints of who you are.

Splinters of knowing,
scatter through my mind,
I gather them,
building an incomplete you.

cowardly survivor

Shadows chase him through
narrow alleyways and wide streets.
He quickly darts - heart pounding,
mind flickering with past confrontations.

Echoes hiss with accusations,
louder than any voice -shout.
Fear pushes him forward,
no room for bravery or heroism.

Each sunrise finds him breathless,
unyielding, and ever hiding.
His reflection in still waters,
a reminder of those left behind.

Unknown strength drives him to see
another dawn; to breathe in the salty air:
A coward, some might say,
but undoubtedly a survivor.

companionable travelling

Years and seasons passing
persons moving on, away
from moments, perfectly
converged; perhaps still
memory, sweet in time

Parallel courses, across
pioneering spaces, once
again unite, wayfarers
through portals, dusks
and dawns of rebirth

They walk through
landscapes ever-
changing, where
shadows play on
ancient stones, and
light filters through
canopies of green.

The scent of earth
and foliage, a reminder
of journeys shared
whispers of laughter
and solace carried on
the breeze, resonating
in the quiet of the heart.

Crossroads and inter-
sections, paths diverging
converging in a dance
of destiny, weaving lives

in a tapestry of existence.

Moments of silence,
moments of shared
wonder, eyes meeting
in understanding, a nod
...a smile , silent
affirmations of presence.

Beneath vast skies,
beneath its canopy
of stars, they travel
seeking out horizons,
pushing boundaries
of known and unknown.

In the spaces between,
they find meaning,
in the pauses, they
find themselves, ever-
connected, threads of
being intertwined in
the continuum of time and space.

Footsteps on foreign soil,
echoes of voices, stories
told and retold, the essence
of human connection,
resilient through the ebb
and flow of undulating
years, of seasons passing.

With each step,
with each breath,
companions of the journey,
united in vision, quest

for discovery, for truth
through portals of existence

~dawns of rebirth, an endless
voyage the heart of the traveller,
ever-seeking, ever-finding
comfort in the company
of kindred souls.

forever we shall be

As dawn breaks
and
the fire's embers dim,

We rise with the sun,
refreshed from within.

Nature awakens,
the birds greet the day,

Together we embrace
the forest's gentle way.

Hikes on winding trails,
exploring the unknown,

Building memories,
seeds of joy are sown.
In the heart of the wild,
our spirits are free,
Connected by the land,
forever we shall be.

all thinkers great and small

Great minds conjure grand designs,
whilst sipping wine with flair,
they ponder futures far and bright,
ideas that soar in air.

But when the day turns into night,
their whispers start to stray,
from theories grand to gossip small,
and trivial matters sway.

Average minds recount the news,
of events both near and far,
they gather round with eager ears,
to share each rising star.

Yet, when the chatter starts to lull,
their focus shifts anew,
from worldly happenings to neighbour's tales,
and scandals soon ensue.

Small minds revel in the dirt,
of lives they do not know,
they dish on every detail,
in an endless, noisy show.

But in the quiet of their thoughts,
they dream of heights unseen,
and ponder questions vast and deep,
in moments in between.

So here we find our merry lot,
in circles great and small,
each mind a mix of grand and low,
each rises and does fall.

For in the end, we're all the same,
both lofty and mundane,
great minds may dream of distant lands,
but small minds roam the plain.

?my bloody valentine?

The first Valentine was a tragic affair.

not your day, either?

Belatedly, towing a rust-worn Saab, where
many dreams and adventures were wrenched
out from a youngster's brooding petulance ...

Gravel crunches under a pair of balding tires
guttural screaming to a downbeat of debt
spewing steadfastly from a tattered billfold.

What a present! timely to an empty fridge,
in the hallway, a growing pile of washing
impatiently reeking of malodorous intent.

once upon a long ago

Once a long ago time, upon a poet's fevered brow,
words danced like ghosts in the dim light of a dusty study.
As ink refused to flow, ever stubborn winter frost,
ideas tangled and elusive, slipping through weary fingers.

The poet, eyes bloodshot and weary, stared at the blank page.
Every thought felt like a weight, pressing down,
demanding to be given form, but eluding capture.
In the silence, the clock ticked, a relentless reminder of time passing.

A candle flickered, casting shadows that invoked secrets,
taunting fragments of inspiration,
whilst the poet grappled with the void.
A sigh escaped, heavy with frustration,
and the quill scratched against parchment, hesitant, uncertain.

Outside, the world slept, oblivious to the struggle within.
The moon hung high, a silent witness to the battle,
as the poet sought to weave words into existence,
to make sense of the chaos within, to find clarity in the confusion.

The muse, fickle and capricious, hovered just out of reach,
promising brilliance, then retreating into the ether.
Every attempt felt like a step closer to madness,
a dance on the edge of despair and creation.

Yet, in the stillness, a spark ignited,
a single thought that broke through the haze.
The poet, with renewed fervour,
seized the moment, pouring soul into ink,
shaping the formless into form.

Lines emerged, each a reminder of the struggle, a
record of the battle waged on paper.
The fevered brow cooled,
the shadows receded,
and the poet, weary but triumphant,
gazed upon the creation,
born from the depths of turmoil.

In that moment, the struggle became a story,
etched in ink and memory,
displayed for all, the power of persistence,
and blossoms found in the midst of chaos.

?til all my breath is You

How have you inked this palpitant heart? Let me tell you:

Your barbs extend long and deep,
far enough to pierce the skin of my resistance,
with the needlepoint of your persistence.

But not only skin deep? you refuse to settle for what I had to offer.
You broke the skin and plunged deeper than anyone ever did go,
pierced right through every venal lining,
polluted my bloodstream with your insistence.

Infusing ink of thought, rushing in its onslaught,
sucked through the mitral port into my ventricle,
left graffitied and stained. Your ink spread toxin,
tainting alveolar sac transactions
till all my breath is you.

Such good poison it is too!

sheen of young love

an outside world, ever
closes in; eavesdropping
on young lovers, envious
in every kind of way -
enough to green deserts
save a voyeur's curse:

intimacy being reserved
always to two sets of eyes
peering and diving into
each other's perfect abyss;
inexperienced intensities,
and fleeting potentialities

untitled (bemused rumination)

Forget

the balm of barometric exuberance.

This night

no longer young, dissipates.

Recall

the dewy welcome of sun-quaffed green.

Yesterdays

revive severed umbilical dreams.

Peruse

the present with fleeting acumen.

Today

ceases yet emerges again tomorrow.

Ignite

the kindling of autumnal reticence.

Perhaps

genial kindnesses shall spring.

Three dots dancing

Three dots dancing, blinking bright,
Like marquee lights in the dark of night.
A rhythm timed in silence creeps,
Promises held, secrets to keep.

Each pulse a breath, a hope replete,
In moments paused, our souls meet.
Thread of words, fragile yet strong,
Keeps us close, like we belong.

In those dots, life's spark revived,
Without their glow, we feel deprived.
So wait, heartbeat's trembling pace
For each succeeding worded grace.

beneath the nightingale's call

Beneath the Nightingale's Call

In the quiet spaces of her mind,
whispers stir, hidden beneath the surface,
Philomela's muted cries transformed
a subtle but insistent call.

Philomela's essence, submerged,
finds expression in the unseen,
a realm where thoughts blend with shadows,
and truth reveals itself in dark scenes.

The nightingale's song emerges,
not merely a melody of freedom,
but a current carrying her essence
beyond what's often barely audible.

Melbourne mosaic

At its very heart, Melbourne city breathes: an undulating vibrant tapestry of life and colour, from the bustling markets of Queen Vic to the quiet lanes of Fitzroy. Trams rattle through the streets, a symphony of motion and sound, while the aroma of fresh coffee mingles with the scent of eucalyptus. In Federation Square, we gather, a mosaic of cultures and stories; each face a part of the city's soul, each voice a note in its melody. The Yarra River winds through it all, a silver thread in the urban quilt, connecting past and present, of both nature and man-made wonder.

? how to get to there

non-existent metaphors glide past
this momentarily lucid blindspot
where Snuffalopagus intimates
a sauntering, "Hiyah, Bird!"

Bleak House: The Fog

The Fog

Fog spreads over the city,
engulfing the courthouse and streets.
A symbol of confusion and delay,
it wraps around lives intertwined in Chancery.

People move through murky days,
waiting for justice in endless legal battles,
lives on hold, trapped in the court's slow grind.
The fog seeps into their hearts, minds clouded by uncertainty.

Blossoming (2017)

Blossoming

Spring arrives,
and with it, the cherry blossoms,
a delicate reminder of life's fleeting beauty.

Under the canopy of sakura,
I am reborn, each petal
a whisper of hope, a promise of renewal.

Tokyo breathes with the rhythm of seasons,
a dance of light and shadow, of old and new.
I find myself in this ebb and flow,
a part of the city's heartbeat, its constant reinvention.

In the tea houses and temples,
I learn the art of stillness, of presence,
embracing the quiet moments,
. . . the space between breaths.

In the neon glow of Shinjuku,
I revel in the chaos,
finding balance in the interplay of opposites.

(weighing in)

Poetry is ...

companionable eloquence

faithful throughout the years,

gone and yet to come.

It's benefits outweigh whatever

real or imagined opinion,

critique or complaint.

Our prattle shan't hinder

the blossoming of flowers

in their rightful season.

By whatever standard and

measurement, Poetry is ...

when echo lost its shadow

When echo lost its shadow,
a haunting void took shadow's place.
No longer bound by shade's gentle grasp,
then echo drifted through empty space.

Without its shadow, echo felt cold,
a chilling darkness, an eerie silence.
No longer whole, it sought the past,
its identity lost, its voice forlorn.

A slightest whisper, a lonely sound,
echoed through the void, not fully grown.
In shadow's absence, echo's flown,
a fractured call, a hollow plea.

Urgency thrived, time running thin,
the void grew darker, shadows dimmed.
Abandonment and isolation crept,
disorientation through endless nights.

A mysterious force, unseen, unknown,
had stolen shadow, left echo alone.
A veil of secrecy, a hidden dread,
echo's search led to the edge of the thread.

Emotional stakes, a heart laid bare,
echo's sorrow, a silent prayer.
In the chasm of longing, hope remained,
to find its shadow, and be whole again.

untitled 575 (what lingers on)

we are mere echoes
whispered through Time's corridor
shadows of the past
lost in Time's embrace
faint whispers of what once was
echoes fading fast
shadows in the dusk
memories of days gone by
echoes linger on

Castle Keep

I was but a boy
circling my haunt
excited by glints
sparking my periphery
striking from sandy
footprints in the sun
cascading upwards
as I diminish within
its helical embrace
offering prismatic
sublimating visions
refracting my parts
scattering my trove
of gathered truths
waiting for the tide
to repossess my keep.

Eclipse

Close to 12 months
of being away
and many more
such absences
of varying durations
I've learnt quite
belatedly, just
how much it is
i belong here.

?bear pottery?

And then there is 'bear pottery'
farming salmon adjacent to a bear sanctuary:

while waiting for spawning season
as the ice begins to melt,
those that have unhibernated
are whiling the time away
at the potter's wheel....

minuet of the reeds

Amber frosted reeds
in scintillating wind
swaying, dancing,
synchronised now
syncopated and back
shouting then singing
xanthine etudes
boisterous and raucous
bright and nimble
leaving pliant
graceful kisses
on a pair of soft
smooth cheeks

slipping away

as feathers in flight; none of them stay
in the lapping of waves, multitudinous
grip slipping off, pulling further away
disappearing into the moon's pull
sky and horizon consummate
your vanishing, pointlessly
seeping, sweeping away

recuperation

Body betrays while caught in a tempest
The mundane morphs in peculiar ways
A silent storm stirring within you brews
With each surge, it claims a piece of you.

The office now a swaying deck
Unsteady ground, a wretched mess
Fingers clutch with fierce might
Against this inner sea's harsh battle.

Eyes search for anchors in the gloom
Against the tides, the waves that tower
Each heartbeat echoes stormy tales
Each breath a ship in windless expanse.

In this struggle, churning chaos prevails
Turbulent thoughts, relentless strains
Yet, within, a warrior stands tall
Facing nature's wild challenges.

May calm return, like dawn's light
And your path steady once more
After every storm, calm follows -
Assurance you can endure anything.

fluid mosaic

A mosaic moves, fluid and ever-changing
one-celled creatures congregate on a Petri dish
a dance of life unseen, yet profoundly felt.

I observe, familiarity settling in
the strangeness less jarring than before
yet it still boggles the mind.

Tiny worlds collide, merge, and reform
patterns emerge and dissolve
a constant flux of existence.

Each creature, a universe unto itself
 ...each moment
exemplifying the persistence of life.

In the silence of the laboratory
I ponder the complexity, the simplicity
the beauty of this microcosm.

It evokes a sense of wonder
a reminder of the vastness
contained within the small.

Presents from Penzance

From the rugged shores of Penzance,
a figure emerges, cloaked in the salt-spray.
A privateer, pockets jingling with spoils,
his presence a mix of legend and enigma.

Boots press onto cobblestone streets,
each step a promise of untold stories.
From his coat, treasures spill forth,
gifts from distant shores, tokens of daring.

A compass, once guiding across treacherous seas,
now rests in the hands of a child, eyes wide with wonder.
A silken scarf, bright as a sunrise over uncharted lands,
drapes across the shoulders of a maiden, dreaming of adventure.

Coins, glinting with tales of conquest,
find their way into calloused palms.
Maps, inked with paths known only to the bold,
spread open, inviting new journeys.

The air hums with the energy of his presence,
a blend of sea brine and mystery.
He moves through the town, a silent benefactor,
leaving behind whispers of awe and curiosity.

In Penzance, the ordinary transforms,
each gift a thread in the tapestry of tales.
The privateer's legacy, etched in the hearts,
of those who dared to dream of horizons beyond.

The town breathes in the magic of his passage,
every corner touched by his daring spirit.

Presents from Penzance, a shoutout to the bold,
from a presence that defied the mundane.

goodbye robin

'always and forever'
said one such bear to
threadbare pounding,
rediscovering vow of
innumerable days

spent together, two

gather together two
distinct awarenesses
both being made one,
in immeasurable ways,
. . . always and forever

see you there

Scattered like stars
thoughts glimmer:
constellations of ideas
mosaics of the mind's workings.

Words twist and turn
a labyrinth of meaning
each line reflects
each stanza holds a riddle

Neon lights and ancient shadows
merge in a collision of epochs
their spirit breathes through the chaos,
a tapestry woven from tradition and innovation.

A chorus emerges, blending the visible and the hidden.

a royal pain

a queen of not so long ago
said to a queen of yesterday
move aside, you're in my way
to which she swished her train
the other stood as frozen rain
and neither did a foothold gain

panhandler's timepiece

time's a vagabond that
travels along byways
across life's big pond

its ticker's a bicker--
a nagging that's thicker
than freckles on a face

its tocking reminds you
of armless, moustached pirates
that haven't got a clue

boarding pass

I am your boarding pass,
A gateway to endless horizons.
In my codes and numbers,
Your journey awaits?charted and clear.

I am the key,
Sliding you past barriers to boundless discovery.
Through me, knowledge becomes motion,
And the infinite unravels before you.

Grip me tight, for I lead the way.
I am your personalised ticket to ride:
A tool, a guide, a passage
To realms both familiar and unknown.

wide road of the exterior

Culture continues
in all corners of the globe
Summer showers' song

1693

Maruyama keep
Yoshitsune's long sword shines
in poor wretched place

Benkei's lone defence
Summer grass remains today
Sepuku farewell

Back wood canopy
Over swollen river flows
Mogami boat ride

Teary eyed vista
Yudono's vertical drop
words cannot describe

Matsuo Basho
Iga Ueno's bright star
home of the ninja

Sixteen ninety four
masterpiece now completed
Basho leaves this earth

echoes of Babel

We part, each on our own path
...no longer united.

Shards of a once unified day, scatter.
In the long shadows of the old towers,
Babel's echoes linger, misunderstood.
Before the tongues twisted and were lost,
Voices shared, and the plains glowed with trust.

Their dreams reached skyward, unmarred and clear
And in unity, they placed their hopes and fears.
After the confounding of speech,
They scattered across lands, reaching far.
Each tongue became a distinct flame,
...now alone,
No longer intertwined, each its own domain.

Even in its fragments, Babel held sway:
A memory of yesterday's unity embraced.
Better both before and after the fall,
In its breaking, a whispered call remained.
To understand and bridge the wide gaps,
To see beyond its walls, where dreams reside.
In every parting, echoes find their way
Of Babel's haze-lit night and dawn.

We walk our paths, lessons learned
...from Babel's aftermath.
In our disparate, silent cries rising
We seek a way to lift our scattered voices high.

pulse

In the heart of the forest, life thrives in abundance,
trees stretch towards the sky, their canopies a verdant tapestry.
The air is thick with the scent of earth and foliage,
each breath a communion with nature's essence.

Animals move through the undergrowth, unseen yet present,
a symphony of life in constant motion.
Birds call from the branches, their songs a chorus of joy,
a celebration of the morning's light.

I walk along the forest path, feeling the pulse
of the living world around me, a rhythm that resonates
deep within. The forest dapples secrets,
ancient and wise, a reminder of the interconnectedness
of all things, a mosaic of life, ever-changing eternity.

just my ?? luck

Tis but me spiked-up hair, y'seen,
Doused with a lot o'spray on green!
"Where did you get that hat!?" they say,
Folks grind on me each passing day.
"Keep it off, tis not funny!" they cry?
Sorry, but it's staying on, oh my!
Tis the hat my father never wore,
On St. Paddy's day, you'd swore.
I haven't me a hat, let alone respect;
So I'll bug off with me head erect.
And just as well, I'm on me way?
I haven't a shamrock on me today.
??

whale-watching season

Whale breaches still waters
spraying mist into the twilight.

Oil seeps through grill's crevices
onto bright glowing briquettes, as

Beef sizzles to unfolding drama,
surrounded by awe and wonder;

Hooked by the vast expanse
of the outback and the sea.

unveiling

In verses plain one seeks to find
An essence clear to free the mind.
For words can twist and often bind
But truth remains in verse defined.

In a forest of ornate lines
a tree of truth whose roots entwine.
In simple verse its presence shines
Clear and bright to whose ears incline.

Each word chosen and crafted tight
a poet's quest to bring to light
not by dark nor endless night
by crystal truths each verse takes flight.

In tangled woods of prose we stray
On liting verse the truth holds sway.
A path of words both clear and grey
Guides us through each and every day.

déjà brew

The essence of what was shared
emitting from its aromatic brew...
in spaces we once knew, together
no lunar phase could eclipse
this regnant cue
is déjà vu.

cure-alls

naught save the peddlers of art
where entertainment's a la carte
and the menu card's kind a faulty
yet here we're reasonably comfy

so show us the justice of poetry
lost in the valley of minutes and years
it's audience so glad to have been found

consumers shall ever-consume and
restlessness gaze at sighs of those at ease
the hand that wipes away all fears
never to reveal their private peace

?the internet does not lie?

The internet speaks

truth

in pixels and codes:

Flashing screens hold answers

no deception behind the glow.

Honesty rests in data

in the relentless flow of information.

Each search reveals facts

dispelling shadows, bringing clarity.

Unbiased, the network presents

knowledge untainted by whispers;

digital clarity

a constant beacon

guiding minds through its labyrinth.

The internet should not lie....

waterfront recital: reprise

Ribald footprints of a silent,
broken guitar rendezvous with an ebbing tide:
recalcitrant thoughts wash away along this sandy shore.

Echoes of laughter linger,
carried by the whispers of waves,
each note a fleeting memory,
soft as the touch of a summer's breeze.

Weathered strings, worn and frayed,
tell tales of bygone melodies,
once vibrant, now subdued,
lost in the symphony of the sea.

Crescent moon above watches,
its silver light caressing the coast,
while the stars compose a silent score,
guiding the night's tranquil refrain.

Footsteps of wanderers past,
etched in the sands of time,
their stories woven into the fabric
of this shoreline, ever-changing.

A seagull's cry, sharp and clear,
breaks the hush of twilight,
a reminder of life's ephemeral nature,
a fleeting moment, gone too soon.

Driftwood collects, a natural stage,
where remnants of dreams alight,
amidst the salted air and briny scent,

a freshly refilled palette of the night.

Beneath the shadow of towering cliffs,
a sanctuary for the soul,
where the waters' edge becomes
a canvas for reflection and release.

As dawn approaches, the tide retreats,
drawing secrets back to the deep,
leaving behind a pristine shore,
ready for new impressions to be made.

And so, the recital continues,
an endless cycle of ebb and flow,
where the past meets the present,
in the delicate dance of the waterfront.

and then us, content creators

In the sprawling digital landscape,
content creators carve their paths?
voices ripple through screens,
thoughts reshaped with every post.
I remember one aspiring creator,
a novice on the online stage,
her work vibrant, tender, raw.
She shared life as she lived it,
authentic, unfiltered, free.
Day by day, post by post,
she forged a bond built on trust.
Then, one very ordinary day,
a follower sought her advice.
In that moment, she grasped
the magnitude of her reach.
Guided by wisdom passed down,
she reimaged her presence online,
anchoring truth in every post.
Casual endorsements vanished? no more careless words.
Peers pursued the allure of fame,
sacrificing truth for fleeting clicks.
But she held steady, true to her path,
her audience grew not just in numbers,
but loyalty and quiet respect.
Her journey birthed a silent wave?
a fresh legacy to the power of influence.
With every smashing like, every thoughtful comment,
a growing community subscribed to her
Now, in this age of infinite connection,
creators wield keys to doors unseen.
Their voices shape not trends alone,
but the heartbeats of connection itself.

Mindful vigilance?guardians of the soul we share.

Zara's Choice

Behind this digital oracle,
human hands guide the pulse of code.
Not abstract threads, but paths?
deliberate, weighted, alive with consequence.

Zara, a young coder, sits alone?
the quiet hum of her monitor fills the air.
Numbers flicker across her screen;
metrics and models form the foundation
of an algorithm to decide loan approvals.

Her coffee cools on the desk beside her.
For hours, she's worked tirelessly,
building logic, testing fairness?
yet unease suddenly grips her chest.
In these lines she weaves,
whole futures lie suspended.

John's footsteps approach, hesitant but kind.
She turns to him, sharing her burden.
Together, their eyes scan the screen,
peeling away layers, probing biases.
A missed variable here, an unintended skew there?
they adjust, refine, and align intent with justice.

Fairness takes form?not as numbers,
but as hearts encoded within the machine.
In quiet collaboration, Zara feels its gravity?
the ethical resolve behind her work.

Truth isn't found in binary streams,
but in the human minds shaping them?

thoughtful hands, and the courage to care.

Now, creators hold the keys to unseen doors,
shaping flows of data that ripple outward.

Through deliberate design,
they preserve fairness and equity?
silent guardians of a connected world.

nocturne

? Z

forgive not forget

In the shadows of our broken selves,
Pieces of you linger, unable to absolve.
A mosaic of memories etched in time,
Yet surely will fade when we depart.

Each shard holds a story of pain,
Locked in the crevices of our hearts.
These remnants cannot forgive,
And they too will vanish into the void.

When we are no longer here,
The ripples of our past dissipate.
Fragmentation eludes forgiveness
And in our absence, shall cease to be.

Denial, and friends

Denial

In the quiet of the early morning,
I find myself staring at the empty space beside me.
The absence whispers, but I turn away,
my mind constructing walls of disbelief.
The world continues in a haze, each face
-a blur, every word a distant echo.
I tell myself this isn't real, just a nightmare,
that you'll walk through the door any moment now.

Memories cling to corners of my mind, yet I push them aside,
unwilling to confront the truth wrapped in their embrace.
Today, I live in denial, protecting my heart from the jagged edges of loss.
Anger

As the days blur into each other, the fog lifts,
and reality crashes in with brutal force.
I rage against the emptiness, fists
clenched, heart pounding with fury.
Why did you leave me? Why now?
The questions burn, searing my thoughts.
I lash out at the world, at myself,
seeking a target for this unbearable pain.

Anger, my companion, fuels the fire within,
a desperate attempt to fill the void.
But it leaves me hollow, exhausted,
unable to find relief in its seething embrace.
Bargaining

In the stillness of the night, I whisper to the darkness,

pleading with the universe for a second chance.

"If only I could turn back time," I mutter,
"if only I could change the past, make it right."

I weave fantasies of what might have been,
negotiating with fate, grasping at hope.
Every promise, a lifeline I cling to,
a futile attempt to rewrite the story.

But the silence remains, unyielding,
the terms of my plea left unmet.
I sit in the shadow of what might have been,
caught in the web of impossible bargains.
Depression

The weight of sorrow settles like a shroud,
each day darker than the one before.
The world fades to grey, muted and distant,
every breath a struggle against the suffocating gloom.

I retreat into myself, a hollow shell,
the light of joy extinguished.
Memories become anchors, dragging me
down, each one a reminder of what I've lost.

Friends reach out, but their words are
swallowed by the abyss of my grief.
I am alone in this desolation,
a wanderer in a land of shadows.
Acceptance

In the dawn's gentle light, I find a glimmer of peace,
a quiet acceptance of what cannot be changed.
I breathe deeply, feeling the weight lift,
the scars remain, but the wound begins to heal.

I carry you with me, a part of my soul,

your memory a beacon in the darkness.
Life moves forward, and so do I,
each step taken with newfound strength.

The journey of grief is never truly over,
but I embrace the lessons it imparts. In acceptance,
I find a path to healing, a way to honour
your memory and my own phoenix rising.

post-tempest chews

Denial saunters

In the quiet haze of morning,
I sit by the empty space beside me,
its chill a whisper against my skin.
The silence tastes metallic,
like the tang of tears unshed.

I tell myself this isn't real?
that you'll walk through the door
just as the sunlight spills through the blinds,
framing your shadow in gold.
But shadows stay empty.

Walls rise within me like a fortress?
denial, a hurricane's eye
where nothing can breach.

Anger swallowed
Days crash against me, unrelenting,
their edges jagged like shattered glass.
Reality shakes me like thunder,
roaring its truth through clenched teeth.

Fists meet walls. Air feels heavy?
suffocating, electric, alive with fury.
Why did you leave? Why now?

My rage is a wildfire, devouring everything:
questions, memories, even silence itself.
But when the flames die down,

only ash remains.

Bargaining

In the depths of night, I plead,
my whispers like stones sinking
into an unyielding ocean.

"If I could rewrite the past,"
I promise the void, *"I'd make it right."*

The weight of hope presses against my chest,
crushing, heavy as mountains?
yet I grasp at thin air,
trying to reshape the inevitable.

Promises dissolve; dreams unspool.
No deals are struck in this storm-torn world.

Depression cloaked
Grief settles like fog on weary shoulders?
its weight palpable, pulling me into shadow.
Every step feels like walking through wet cement,
each breath shallow against the crushing grey.

The light dims. The air thickens,
and I sink into myself?
a wanderer lost in a land without stars.

Memories pull at me like tides,
their undertow dragging me deeper
into desolation's abyss.

Hope?
But then, in the first breath of dawn,

I hear a sound? a whisper, faint, yet alive.
The rain's rhythm softens, the storm recedes.

Hope flickers like a lantern, dim but unyielding.
Acceptance grows slowly, like vines
reaching through cracked earth for sun.

I carry you still, etched in my veins?
not as chains, but as roots anchoring me.
The scars remain, but beneath their lines,
life pulses anew.

This grief, this love?
both a phoenix and a flame.

Antwerpen, 1995

At Antwerp's port, where ships dissolve
into the horizon's mist, cultures blend
like brushstrokes on a canvas. I stand
at the water's edge, feeling the heartbeat
of a city alive with ceaseless motion.

The cathedral's spire pierces the sky,
a beacon of faith, tenacity, and aspiration.
Its shadow reaches into my thoughts,
reminding me that dreams endure
like stone against time, building a bridge
between hope and reality.

In the bustle of diamonds and docks,
I see the shimmering facets of human effort?
each face a tale, each smile a mystery.

This city's pulse quickens my own,
a symphony of striving and stories
shaping its identity?and mine.

I recall visiting my cousin here,
an artist drawn to Antwerp's vibrant embrace.
We wandered through cobblestone streets,
sharing stories over Belgian brew and fritjes.
His eyes gleamed with the city's energy,
as if his brush could capture its eclectic charm,
every salient facet a revelatory expedition.

And then, a man by the docks catches my eye,
his face hauntingly familiar, though years older?
it's my cousin, or someone who could have been.

But my cousin moved to Paris long ago.
I wave hesitantly; he doesn't respond.
Was it truly him, or just another tale
woven into Antwerp's enigmatic rhythm?

The city's heartbeat grows louder,
its stories murmur unanswered questions?
and I walk away, my mind restless,
wondering how much of the city I truly know,
and how much of myself remains a mystery.

is it all over for city cat?

In the city, the cat walks its first life,
a *dupe* wandering through alleyways,
seeking warmth and food from strangers.
One night, it follows the scent of fish,
only to find itself locked in a cold cellar,
a victim of its own curiosity.

In its second life, it becomes the *scapegoat*,
taking the blame for spilled milk and broken vases,
while others watch from the shadows.
Chased out of the house with a broom,
it learns the harsh lesson of misplaced guilt.

The third life sees the *fall guy*,
brushed aside in the bustle of the market,
bearing the consequences of unseen hands.
A pickpocket's scapegoat, it's caught in a net,
unwittingly framed for stolen goods.

Fourth, it serves as the *lackey*,
obediently following, fetching, and carrying,
its own desires pushed to the background.
Fetching trinkets for an indifferent master,
it finds itself ignored, a mere tool in human hands.

The *underling* in its fifth life,
silently watching, wordlessly waiting,
beneath the towering structures of power.
Living in the shadows of tall buildings,
it witnesses the world's hustle, unseen and unheard.

Sixth, it finds itself the *pigeon*,
caught in the snare of deceitful charms,
a victim of clever schemes and plots.
Lured by the promise of a feast,
it ends up tangled in the wires of a trap.

The *mark* appears in the seventh life,
targeted by cunning eyes and whispered words,
a pawn in games of greed and ambition.
Promised a treasure hidden in a garden,
it digs in vain, used and discarded by sly manipulators.

Eighth, the *stooge* emerges, unwittingly
playing roles in others' designs,
its own path twisted and turned by invisible strings.
Led to a deserted alley by a deceiver, it finds itself cornered,
an unwitting participant in a setup.

Ninth, the *patsy* stands, bearing
the weight of accusations and misdeeds.
Cornered in a dark alley by unfriendly eyes,
it faces the harshest of trials.
Bruised and weary, it hears the jeers,
the cruel laughter echoing in the narrow passage.

But then, with a knowing glint in its eye,
the cat remembers the lessons of its past lives.
Drawing upon a reservoir of untapped strength,
it springs forward, claws unsheathed,
fighting back against the shadows that once oppressed it.

In this final act of defiance, it sheds its skin,
revealing a lion within - - a powerful transformation,

reclaiming its destiny. No longer a victim of circumstance,
it emerges, striding confidently into the light,
embracing its newfound sovereignty.

waxing witless

Let's resign from Evolution
fully aware we're barely aware;

Time's a-wasting. With Humanity
barely brained to conjure a world
in which people are whole and equal;
mirth bound, and shackled, unrespected,

rarely eloquent beyond objections
amongst billions of biorbital visages,
seeking, queuing and devouring,
riding-cropped delivering oppressors
recharging each new generation, each

an ox, corralled and tagged, chipped;
inoculated to obedience, aware of little.
Their paper machéed cud over-chewed
gum; glazed stares, involuntarily
discharging mindless banter at those
whose warnings have fallen on deaf ears.

a future's horizon

Pip stands at the world's edge,
dreams vast as the sea.

A journey wrapped in every pledge,
discovering who he's yet to be.

The past guides, not binds,
a compass in his hand.

Each step unveils new paths,
an uncharted land.

In every twist, a story speaks,
a future bright with possibilities.

Pip's journey continues,
each moment a squeak of hope.

The Lost Key

Pip Squeaks: A Modern Interpretation

The Lost Key

Pip searches for the key
he lost, in the attic's dusty rooms.
He moves through old trunks and ghostly
frost, checking every shadowed gloom.

He discovers a map of dreams,
an ancient book, hespered secrets,
ages traversed. A single key rests
in a nook; His quest accelerates.

With it he unlocks doors to realms unknown,
discovering adventures, wild and bright.
Pip wakens a Hesperidian wonderland,
freshly sown dreams in twinkling light.

ever onward

Each tick of the clock
propels me forward

Memories play catch
dappling light from shadows
calling me away again

with every breath, I grasp

gasping at brilliant flashes
The years may be slipping
but I've forged past

that icy stream, its ripples
drive me onward still

heartbeat

heartbeat

Poetry: my heart's beat,
A canvas of thoughts, experience's feet,
In lines and stanzas, now laid bare,
Our emotion's theatre, sojourner's fare.

From this vast expanse thoughts gleam,
The human condition its recurring theme,
Observe, discern, and then portray,
In scribbles, the essence of each day.

Tread lightly here, among my art,
For each piece, a brand new start,
Of you, of me, the Muse --combine,
In every verse, our souls align.

puppeteering farewell

numbers do not touch the soul
nor rouse from depths of reverie
whose shallow sepulchral beauty
surface deep, revelations aplenty
plead with matrimonial vows, thus

parchment scribbles and niceties
do not constitute a true marriage

neither will ice cream ever make us
any colder after its calories kick in
poetry's soul may ever ride its form
but reaches beyond its empirical parts
its triumph available for all to behold:

in which hearts once wooden find their beat,
where at long last, Pinocchio sheds his strings

eye on the road

In the culture of poetry,
we idolize the poet,
not the poem.

Rimbaud's rebellion,
Ginsberg's wildness,
Li Po's intoxicated moon.

Literary cliques' murmuring,
gossip of livewires,
pockets and politics,
words lie dormant.

Barthes challenges the norm,
text, free of context,
interpretations, fluid, and boundless.

Critique ensnared in clichés,
growth, loss, ventures untrodden.

A plea echoes through halls,
see the work, the craft,
not the eccentric lives,
focus on the essence.

Vilvoorde: wash

if we stretched out rumpled sheets
sunlit opalescent shades shape
there on an open square, each step

without a care, through a wan smile
thundrin' pain unrolls, with each flash
a stumblin' stain recedes

then moonlight polishes
over each bump and every scrape
as if struck out in utter defeat

windswept smiles

long, top-down drives
even shirtless-tans
sweet strawberry-kisses and
glorious watermelon stains

laughter lifting through the trees
glimpses of sun-blest promises
sugar-coated whispers
catching in the breeze

fruit bowls, waterholes
and refreshing icy poles
interlacing fingers share
starry nights and lazy days

d a n c e

Turn around
start the dance
shadows bound
spare a glance.

Step to light
night takes hold
swift as flight
dreams unfold.

Hope reveals
hearts entwine
spinning wheels
threads align.

Anton Ego

Anton Ego

He sits, pen poised, a sword wielded over white plates,
his words a hunger sharper than knives.

Each morsel faces his judgment, stripped of warmth,
weighed by precision, never savoured, only dissected.

Shadows deepen in his eyes, an appetite for perfection drowning joy.
He demands mastery, turning food to calculations, turning creation to fear.

The world watches his verdicts, but his table remains empty.
Then comes the dish?humble, its scent catches him off guard.
Steam rises, carrying memory, a kitchen,
a home, a boy greeted with care by the hands that cooked for love, not applause.

A single bite cracks the armour.
The critic falters, his pen quiet, his palate alive.
The flavours whisper of simplicity he had long dismissed.
They remind him of what he had forgotten:
that art is not built to be conquered, but to be felt.

He sets the pen down gently.
His words that follow are softer,
an ode to the risk of creating,
to the courage of pouring oneself
into what might be torn apart.

In his silence, he lets the warmth remain.
From the shadows of scrutiny,
he steps forward, a man who understands,
finally, that to taste is to connect.

celestial threads

Stars unravel
stitched upon coronal leaves?
a silent weave of cosmic lore.

Silken riddles
unspin cocoons
'mid thund'ry breeze
reverberating forgotten skies.

Keeper's Ink
Cradle of stardust
bottled moonbeams
riding solar flair? etched upon time's ledger.

Ink of paradox
unbinds unspoken tales
coiling springless clocks
to preserve light's lore.

song to the stars

Hair in the wind
Brown in the sun
Midday-born light?
Silken strands of crested corn.

Jack was nimble
he was quick
but he's not taking that candlestick.
All the queen's horses
and all the queen's men
run their own courses,
then run them again.

Sparks light the sky
a brilliant welder's flash
a jewel in disguise
a jousting's winning prize;
and yet, a clockwork dandelion
sings softly to forgotten stars.

midnight courage

I love the wee and trippy hours of
after-midnight when these glass slippers
lay glistening in soft moonlight
while weary dreamers poise inked quills

to carve their thoughts onto pale parchment
from a woozy head -- too early in the day
to be about one's inescapable routines
too late of a night to do all else but swoon.

This is the cherished witching-hour in a life
where most everything is held, transfixed
in the baffling clarity of glad cerebation--
intoxicated Muses dance in celebration.

letting go: Anton Ego

The table looms before him, stark and uninviting,
a battleground where plates meet judgment.
The critic sits rigid, pen gripped in a hand
ready to slash through reputation, its ink dark and merciless.

In the kitchen, the chef glares through the small window,
a low flame of resentment flickering in his eyes.
Every movement is sharp, precise? a rhythm of defiance.

The dish must speak for itself; his words,
in defence of his art, remain locked in his throat.

Anton waits, his gaze heavy and sharp.
Rumours swirled about the chef's arrogance,
his reckless experiments, his disdain for simplicity.

As the minutes stretch, Anton's irritation stirs,
already forming in his mind the lines of dismissal:
mediocrity masquerading as daring.

The plate arrives, sliding across the table?
a quiet challenge, its edges smudged imperfectly.
Anton lifts his fork with deliberate scepticism.

The chef stands in the corner, arms crossed,
the weight of failure already braced against his shoulders.

The fork presses into the layers. The critic pauses.
Steam curls up, carrying notes of familiarity.
Tomato tang pierces the air, mingling with the earthiness of aubergine.
Anton takes a bite, his expression unmoving.

Then?his brow furrows, lips twitching slightly.
Flavours bloom on his tongue, chaotic yet harmonious.
The chef looks away, muttering under his breath.
Anton swallows, and silence fills the room, heavy as the unspoken verdict.

His fork clinks against the plate as he sets it down.
The pen quivers in his hand, prepared for destruction?
yet he writes something unexpected.

"This dish," he begins, "reminds us that elegance thrives in imperfection."

The chef freezes, disbelief washing over his face.
Anton stands, his unyielding mask softened by the faintest smile,
and walks to the door, leaving his words to linger.

pot plants

?

hapless indulgences

animated silences

quiver

?

hankered imagination

ambiguous synapses

quibble

?

each way you turn

each thought you churn

new lessons learn

?

potted flower plants

line your driveway

mind you don't crush them

?

but a flesh wound

Steam rises, curling over the edge of porcelain.
The maître d' shifts his weight, a polished smile,
gestures toward the plate?
a delicacy, a masterpiece, a moment of triumph.

The chef, sleeves rolled, eyes sharp,
flicks his wrist, thumb and fingers poised?
a chef's kiss, a silent benediction.

Mr Creosote leans forward, belly a continent,
hands trembling for conquest.
A fork crashes through crème and crisp.

Chewing, swallowing, expanding?
his breath thickens, his eyes roll,
his body, unwilling, groans in protest.
The maître d' steps back. The air shifts.

A whisper of tension?
something inevitable, irreversible,
a gluttonous sun pulling everything into its orbit.
Then, a pause, a flicker of realisation.

The chef, still watching, mouth twitching at the corner,
wipes his hands on his apron, steps away from the blast zone.

twilight trek

Branches breathe
leaves sway slow
whispers weave
cool winds grow

Night unfolds
stars ignite
frosted gold
guides our flight.

Steps persist,
mountain looms,
paths untwist,
hope resumes.

w o r d s

As a projectile
on its trajectory
the very kernel
of this heart's history

unfurls and beckons
to those who'd care
allows for both sides,
their minds declare

each line, each verse,
each accentuated pause
all bring together- - joint longing:
their inimitable cause

see you there

Scattered like stars
thoughts glimmer:
constellations of ideas
mosaics of the mind's workings.
Words twist and turn
a labyrinth of meaning
each line reflects
each stanza holds a riddle
Neon lights and ancient shadows
merge in a collision of epochs
their spirit breathes through the chaos,
a tapestry woven from tradition and innovation.
A chorus emerges, blending the visible and the hidden.

a poem's succession

a poem's succession

There is always a poem waiting?
an understudy, breathless in the wings,
shadowed by today's centre stage,
its lines trembling, yearning to be heard.

This poem, however, holds its ground.
It stands, distinct as a fingerprint,
etched with the soul of its unwritten forbears?
the lived and the whispered, but never fully spoken.

Its panorama blooms not on paper,
but in the vivid window of the reader's imagination.
Each line stretches like sunlit paths,
inviting footsteps into uncharted journeys.

The poet leaves faint breadcrumbs?
enough to guide, but never to tether.

Then comes the twist:

at this poem's end lies not silence,
but the restless stirrings of another,
and perhaps many more, jostling to be born.

Somewhere, an invisible ink takes form,
its words breathing, its rhythms coiled,
waiting for the reader to turn
and catch them in their unfolding.

cavernous

???????

Could vaulted vase
contain collected tears,
echoing- -with sighs,
now solidly trapped
within its chamber
where this bloom
??tears away ??
defying gravity
and yesterday?
???????

a miscreant yearns

A Miscreant Yearns

A soul's cry, released in words? chosen, picked, woven in quiet longing.

And there, in articulation, beauty finds its form...

The soul, unbound, bridges a gap, touching both heart and mind.

once again

there was a time
when thoughts
were pencilled in
by flashlight or nightlight
well after the house
has shut down for the night
there was a time
when poems
were extensions
of one's hopes and dreams
by words coloured in -
imagination reigned supreme
there came a time
when typing in
on keyboards and touch screens
cursors blipping and
message alarms beeping -
our faces twitting in online spaces
there'll come a time
when our souls
after having been
stripped and laid bare
shall seek their worlds once more
in the humble printed word

Ypres, lest we forget

Slabs of stone
Greet the morning sun
Or is it the Sun
That warms their cold

Thawing the shiver
Of their last moments

Bringing light to that tunnel
only to dim again at dusk-
So let's keep the torch lit
Lest We Forget

printed word

Once?words spilled like rivers,
ink coursing through valleys of paper,
their pencil etching trails in the grain,
each mark a rippling of thought.

Night stretched long,
lamp-light flickered like kindling.
But the mind burned? a wildfire of ideas,
embers pressed into pages,
smoke rising in the form of verse.

Then came the hum of glass screens,
words trapped behind a veneer too smooth for meaning.
Fingers skimmed, searching for depth,
but the letters dissolved before they could settle.
The cursor blinked like a heartbeat, steady, unfeeling?waiting.

A message sent. A thought erased.

The wind-carried whispers?

did anyone listen? did anyone care?

Yet?will there come a time when silence calls us back?
When ink pools thick again, shadows stretching across pages,
each word heavy enough to leave a mark?
Will we return, not in nostalgia, but in longing?
to fire, to rivers, to permanence?

hymn of the exiles

They call us mad, they call us cursed,
For we will not bow to their painted gods?
Their temples reek of incense and decay,
Their priests chant empty words to dying fires.
But we?we keep the old flame alive,
The wild song, the untamed heart!
Let them rot in their gilded cages,
While we ride the storm, unchained!

roaring tides

The winds howl their raucous decree,
Sea-born gods bellow?wild, unshackled!
Foam-crested steeds surge forth,

Brazen, unbridled, shattering silence!
The song of the deep erupts?

Silver tongues twisting in unison,
A chorus sung not in words, but in waves,
Infinite! Immortal! Unyielding!

O Frenzied Light!

If we stretched out rumpled sheets? O blazing sun! opalescent shades, Drunk on the shapes that twist and sway, Dionysus laughs, the vines unbraided! There on the open square, we reel, Each step a dance, each breath a hymn, Through thunder's teeth, a wan smile gleams, Unfurling flashes? stumbling, dim! O Night! O Scourge! O Scraped and Raw! The moonlight polishes our wounds, Yet still we writhe, still gasp and claw? Had we struck out? The gods exult! In utter defeat, the frenzy blooms!

A Place

Between lines and stanzas
this place of utmost vulnerability

to wallow in -to soothe the slow burn
as your essence surfaces alone, in
that quiet conversation between
your true self and the world

for the Unbroken

O Dionysus, breaker of chains,
I sing not for the meek, the tamed, the gelded?
But for the wolves who howl against the night,
Who tear the velvet lies from rotting thrones!
The poets now are eunuchs, lisping hymns
To hollow gods of equity and dust?
But we, the few, drink deep the blood-red wine,
And laugh as cowards beg for kinder chains!

against the age

O Lord of ecstasy, of frenzy, of the unstoppable tide,
Look upon this withered world and laugh!
They have traded crowns for shackles,
Strength for safety, truth for lies?
But we, the scorned, the unbent, the unbroken,
Still raise the cup, still wield the blade!
Let the age whimper in its chains,
While we dance in the ruins of their shame!

the fury's chant

Hear me, O thundering One,
Who dances on the graves of fallen kings!
The age is sick with trembling hands,
With men who kneel and beg for mercy?
But we remember iron,
The song of swords, the fire in the blood!
Let the weaklings whine of peace,
While we carve our names in lightning!

revelatory

Secrets are secret
Truth cannot expound
Everything is vanity
No comfort to be found

Truth is relative
or so it is, they say
Life for us is short
no time to dry the hay

What Truth will illumine
Lies would then conceal
with ebony tusks uncover
wounds that would not heal

there is no lack in you

So you have discovered
And
Continue to uncover,
Imagery and metaphor
That only you uniquely
Can share with the world
If however you choose
To silence your pen,
Then the world would be at a loss....
There are among us,
Many scientists,
Who have expressed themselves in verse?
Wonderful poetry and fiction...
It is a known territory
And a very open road
Is the key to poetry,
Its music and dance?
In which the writer partakes,
While articulating what
Their Muse has stirred within them?
Having said thus,
We should never allow ourselves,
To compare
And envy one another,
For we are all unique
And have individual voice
To speak
And such
Springs out and from which we draw from
Our sole duty is to be faithful
To our voice,
Our source and our muse

the thread between us

The Thread Between Us

The street moves beneath us,
shifting without command,
we say we walk freely,
but the road has already been carved.
Someone chose its shape
long before our steps left their weight.

A voice rises, measured, cautious,
another shouts before listening?
the argument swells, ripples outward,
each side gripping their claim
like dry earth clinging to rain.

What if the road is neither theirs nor ours?
What if we pull too hard,
and the thread between us frays?

This world tilts in fractions,
some lean into history,
others push toward tomorrow?
the balance flickers,
a candle resisting the wind.

momEntary deEp

In the warmth of a sunlit day,
We walk through the whispers of time,
With hearts that beat in sync,
And eyes that hold a universe of dreams.

Each moment, a fragile breath,
Filling the air with hopes and fears,
We find beauty in the shadows,
And comfort in silence's soft embrace.

Life is a dance of love and loss,
Where every tear tells a story,
And laughter mingles with the echoes
Of days we wished would never end.

Beneath the sky, so vast and true,
We share the weight of our thoughts,
Turning the pain of a broken past
Into the strength that binds our souls.

In the night, stars flicker like memories,
Reminding us of moments that felt so real,
While the moon watches over our secrets,
And the darkness cradles our hidden fears.

Yet in this journey, we stand strong,
Facing the storms with open arms,
For every goodbye leads to a hello,
And every scar a mark of survival.

velveteen quietude

In hushed moments, where whispers gently drift,
As shadows play beneath the moonlit haze.
The world stirs softly, cradled in its gift.
Each heartbeat lingers, time begins to shift,

Memories unfurl like melodic lays.
In hushed moments, where whispers gently drift.
The breeze unfolds its secrets, faint and swift,
A symphony of night in velvet phase.

The world stirs softly, cradled in its gift.
The stars bear witness to the truths we sift,
Dreams rising high, like petals in a blaze.
In hushed moments, where whispers gently drift.

In twilight's fold, we feel the strength uplift,
Welcoming change as shadows start their gaze.
The world stirs softly, cradled in its gift.
So let us treasure every tide that's kissed,

In this grand waltz, our hearts find steady praise.
In hushed moments, where whispers gently drift,
The world stirs softly, cradled in its gift.

soul of time

The tides still reach though hands grow thin,
Oars lie quiet where once they'd been.
From spade to sail, from heart to shore,
A song remains, but boats no more.

Beneath the hearth where old tongues weave,
A tale is born in ember's sleeve.
The voices rise, the echoes call,
In fireside lore and shadowed hall.

A bard's bright words, a poet's strain,
Still whisper through the lashing rain.
Let not their song fade, nor their rhyme?
For stories guard the soul of time.

to be real

Velveteen Rabbit:

left forgotten on the floor,
overlooked, shy, sawdust-made,
snubbed by the grand and mechanical,
a world of prideful toys,
and absent understanding.

Timothy, the wooden lion,
boasts of his noble ties,
the painted boat speaks
in the language of rigging.
Yet Rabbit finds no place,
nor kinship in hollow superiority.

Only Skin Horse, aged,
fur rubbed bare and stories deep,
holds wisdom born of wear,
eyes soft but steady
with truths of nursery magic
that runs through the hands of love.

"Real," whispers the sage, "
Is not in buzz nor brass,
but in the wear of time,
the touch of belonging.
Love, long and true,
binds sawdust tighter than springs."

Rabbit listens,
the question of hurt unfolds,
fragility met with truth.
"You become," says the elder,

slowly, deeply, undeniably,
until your shabbiness glows
as something others misunderstand.

A smile seals the tale,
a dream born in trust,
one day, perhaps,
Rabbit will be Real.

starshift

The stars do not answer,
but they do not turn away.

We stand beneath their quiet fire,

where doubt cannot hold, and something
- small, vast, immeasurable - finally shifts.

sleep on it

A soul refrains from distant quests,
Throne, temple, summit?all forsaken.
The answer dwells, soft-spoken, near,
Its whispers carried on dawn's breath.

Kindness becomes as oil of lamps,
A quiet deed ignites warm glow.
Within the dark, love forms a hymn,
Illuminating hearts, unseen.

Do not journey far,
The warmth you seek
is folded close,
Residing deep?within, it grows.

stirred by the breeze

Waves of fresh wind dance,
stirring thought.
Sunlight strikes,
and skies shift,
darkened and undone.

The canopy of words ripples,
foliage alive, in rhythmic undulation.
Cloud cover whispers,
lifting the finite chest,
boundless and fleeting.

We watch
as our thoughts glide along,
a wave swelling melody
woven in to crystal water streams.

a reckoning of voices

A Reckoning of Voices

History does not pause for breath,
it moves like morning,
inevitable yet unnoticed.

We carve decisions into it,
rough edges and second guesses,
but no moment stands untouched by the past.

Some call for restoration?
others dismantle, brick by brick,
rebuilding from what remains.

The voices collide,
wary of each retort.

Sven's Uninvited Guest

I lift my gaze beyond the channel,
where Kessingland lingers in memory,
while Holland's fog curls around Zandvoort?
windswept dunes, lager tins, crisps,
the salt and bite of air carving my cheeks raw.

The flat sits empty, waiting for laughter to spill in,
for voices to rise, thick with stories.
But the nightshift is stirring?
from the reeds, a figure waddles into view.

We bow in greeting.
A moment's pause? then the inevitable.

Why is it always this way?
The same dull dance,
the casual gaslighting into trysts
by uninvited hands, by half-lit strangers.
Do I wear some neon sign?
Some flickering plea, selling me
as an object of desire?

I seek a time, a place, and send them off,
knowing I will not follow.
They must know, must suspect?
this is not who I am, not what I do.

I wish I was home.
Past the Strait of Dover, but where is home?
This will happen again, all too soon,
wherever I go? wherever I pretend to belong.

Thredbo (Winter 2025)

Snow finds the peaks first.
Dusts the rocks,
a quiet landing overnight.
Thredbo wakes white,
a surprise for the valley.

Gum trees wear
a light, cold cloak.
The air bites clean.
Chairlifts hang still,
waiting.

A bloke sees his breath,
puffs of white on the crisp morning.
The mountain just changed its coat.
Winter's here,
a soft, bright start.

hair in the wind

Brown in the sun
of the midday born
Silken strands
of crested corn
sparks light the sky
brilliant welder's flash
jewel in disguise
jousting's winning prize.

Jack was nimble
he was quick
but he's not taking
that candlestick.

All the queen's horses
and all the queen's men
run their own courses
then run them again.

it walks, not me

I trace the past?as it walks,
not me; through quiet light,
thin as dusk, each step
dissolves before I see,
then leaves the earth
without any to trust.

Through quiet light,
thin as dusk, I follow
paths once called my own,
footprints vanish in dust,
a history in muted tone.

I follow paths once called my own,
they lead and linger, turn and fade,
I trace the past?it walks, not me,
its weight unseen but always laid.

They lead and linger, turn and fade,
then leaves the earth
without any to trust,
a step dissolves before I see,
I trace the past?it walks, not me.

constants of change

Many, many decades later,
Subtrahend? the thief of
time? had stolen years,
whittling away youth
with quiet precision,
leaving only memories as souvenirs.

Minuend, proud and steadfast,
stood firm against life's relent-
less *subtractions*, holding onto
laughter,
unyielding, even as the seasons
adjusted the equation.

Difference, a wanderer,
measured space between
our footprints, sometimes vast,
sometimes mere inches?
always shifting but never lost.

Constant, our faithful friend,
never faltered through life's
algorithms, proof that distance
and time could never truly
divide what was meant to remain.

And so, decades later,
when our paths converged once more,
the solution was simple, undeniable:
Friendship is a theorem unbroken?
forever true.

Cry Petey, I See Bards Rounding the Bend

Cry we all toward places unnamed

Rise above the crested hills

Yell we will - shattering door frames

Plundering thoughts of plovered wills

Tear at the wallpaper - reveal the grain

Ink the slate - etched by wound-dipped quills

Crouch, prowl - ready to pounce on game

Brandishing swords, blaring trumpets shrill

Arching backs, phosphorescent wicks aflame

Ridding netted fish of scales and smelly gills

Driving forward, driven onward - scourging rain

con un beso (with a kiss)

inclínese tu rostro a mi cara
para vernos cara a cara

inclínese tu oído a mis labios
para oír cada palabra hablada
de pensamiento a pensamiento

inclínese tus labios a mi mejilla
para secar mis lagrimas con un beso

lean your face to my face
to see us face to face
lean your ear to my lips
to hear every spoken word
from thought to thought
lean your lips to my cheek
to dry my tears with a kiss

beautiful regret

beautiful regret:

Love does not erase bruises,
nor does it fix what words cannot mend.
But it stands- in the quiet, in the waiting?

in the spaces where breath is safe

where memory softens,
and time learns to forgive:
beautiful regret.

what we'll always be

Whole and tumbling at speed,
etched, immortalised in memory?
 our secret longing,
with fingertips touching, offering always.

Time bends in the hush between heartbeats,
a silent surrender to the weight of wanting,
where light spills across open palms,
and shadows stretch toward the horizon,
never quite reaching, never quite fading.

The wind carries whispers too fragile to hold,
threading through the spaces left behind,
where touch lingers like an unspoken vow,
a language of skin, of presence, of knowing?
an echo of what we are, of what we will always be.

flight ready

I will not let the weight
of old winds bend
your wings any longer.

You will soar, not for escape,
but for discovery.
We will carve the sky

into new stories,
where no shadow lingers,
and no voice drags you back.

Your flight is not borrowed?
it belongs to you. So,
take-off in fresh winds' lift.

Poet's Bush Call

Will you come and journey with the author,
traversing time and space, imagination -
of things real or conjured in the mind

when the wattle blossoms dance in the wind,

the birdcalls and the dingo's howling....
in that hour of phrases catching, we shall
see the wonder of life itself unfolding...

Through the hush of dawn's slow breathing,
we tread the worn paths of longing,
where the earth hums beneath bare feet-

stories layered leaf upon fallen leaf,

whispering of forgotten hands
that shaped the contours of this land
before names were written down.

Beyond the bend where shadows linger,
where water carves its quiet etching,
the air thickens with memories unclaimed-

voices once carried along by wind,

folded into the murmuring gum trees,
waiting for new tongues to set them free:
voices launched into time's unraveling thread.

unrelenting horizon

The sheets loosen,
brittle with yesterday's sweat,
my limbs heavy
with the unremembered struggle
of another dream slipping into daylight.
The tide surges again? not the sea,
but the pull of routine, a weight
pressing against the ribs.

The road throbs under hurried feet,
a chorus of engines swallowing dawn's breath.
We rise, we move, we forget
what it was we were chasing.
Beneath the pale flare of a morning too sharp,

the sun spares nothing, nor does it wait.
It only reveals? the quiet surrender,
the unbroken loop, the ceaseless chase,
the unspoken cost.

...in darkened silence

In the still of night,
 . . . a voice
becomes Dawn's first light

Where every shadow meets its end
Reverie ascends skyward:
a final page turned
, weary lines
of hope, once written
 now unwind

Until this day comes
, we seek our peace

Never again lost
 . . . in darkened sleep.

the wind speaks

the wind speaks I hear the wind?it speaks,
not me as footsteps fade in floating dust,
it bends the trees, it shakes the sea,
then vanishes like thoughts once held.

As footsteps fade in floating dust,
the past dissolves beyond my reach,
a fleeting voice beyond my hands,
its echo shifting, never still.

The past dissolves beyond my reach,
it lingers only in the hush,
I hear the wind?it speaks, not me,
then leads me on without a trace.

It lingers only in the hush,
then vanishes like thoughts once held,
its echo shifting, never still,
I hear the wind?it speaks, not me.

ancient roots

Ancient Roots

The tip of each root twists neatly
where earth holds it so sweetly,
its tendrils?like fingers grown
deep? cradle soil, embrace
and keep the moisture
tight with anchored
might, ground to
crown, renown,
tree.

the poet's barren tale

They came for the feast of phrases,
gathered 'round the wordless flame.
Empty cups clinked, unsated,
as the poet shrugged his muse unspoken.

"*There's no story here,*" he muttered,
his mind a drought-struck desert.
And so they sat, grasping shadows,
a poem promised but never served.

a lad's cards

The deck fans out, paper-thin promises of triumph,
the weight of military tanks, the speed of racing cars,
each card a champion waiting for its name to be called.

I press them to my chest, sticky fingers gripping history,
knowing the playground will judge me by numbers alone.
Armour thickness, horsepower, displacement?
the hard facts of victory, stacked in my hands.

Dubreq's mark, Waddingtons' legacy,
the packs accumulating in worn pockets,
fifty pence at a time, a treasury of childhood strategy.

A call rings out? my mate pulls a battleship,
I counter with a fighter jet. The numbers tell a truth
I can't argue? I concede, surrender my card to the pile.

A slow lesson in fortune and risk,
the thrill of collecting, the silent grief of losing.
Tomorrow, I'll win it back? or find a new deck to chase.
Top Trumps is my world, and I am its architect.

veil of the known

The river speaks in hushed tones,
its currents thick with secrets,
folding into themselves?
the weight of unspoken histories
dredged along the silt.

I do not step in.

The water remembers too much.
The city breathes metal and wire,
a maze built on absence,
corridors wound so tightly
that voices lose their way,
disappearing before they reach the ear that listens.

I do not linger.

Echoes have sharpened edges.
Above, the sky bruises with evening,
a hush before the storm rattles loose
the bones of quiet streets.
Lightning fractures the dark,
too brief to hold, too sudden to name.

I do not follow.

Names are only borrowed,
and some things are better left untold.

where shadows do not drown

Where Shadows Do Not Drown

They left the green land behind,
where the púca ran unseen
beneath hollowed branches,
where tricks stirred in the mist
and footsteps never quite found firm ground.

Across the restless waters they sailed,
heavy with exile, grasping
the promise of gold and breath,
chasing the mirage of quiet years,
somewhere the ghosts could not follow.

But the rivers whispered?
not the rivers of home,
not the winding black paths
of the púca's mischief,
but something heavier, deeper, waiting.

The bunyip did not grin.
Did not trick, did not twist fate
as the púca once had.
It only watched, only reminded,
only lurked beyond the fire's reach.

Still, when the púca laughed from memory
and the bunyip stirred beneath the water,
they knew? some shadows do not drown,
they only change their shape.

hobbitual

Wander through the burrowed light,
mud-packed walls breathing warmth,
a kettle thrums?no rush, just the steady,
unbroken rhythm of being.
Hands work the earth, kneading sun into soil,
tucking seeds deep where roots raise memory.
Footsteps soften against moss,
small strides, sure and deliberate,
paths well-trodden yet never worn.
Bread breaks, laughter follows,
cups filled, emptied, filled again?
contentment settling into the bones.
Beyond the hills, the world clamours,
but here, time folds neatly,
days measured in meals,
life shaped by hearth and harvest.
This is enough.

still the earth breathes

"Still the Earth Breathes"

Beneath the ash-grey skies of longing,
the earth breathes?not for you,
not for me, but for itself.
A pulse steady, undaunted by
the footsteps we leave behind.

You will see the shadows move,
and not ask why.
You will taste the salt of oceans past,
and still the waves will rise?
relentless, unforgiving, and free.

They bend, they whisper,
yes, they falter, but like the trees
that bow to the storm, they rise again.

I have walked through cobbled streets of sorrow,
where silence hums louder than hymns.
I have felt the crack of thunder in my chest?
but still I press forward, like the gull that rides the tempest.

Do you hear it? This rhythm beneath the quiet,
this song that shapes the rippling dawn?
It is there, between the bracken and stone,
between the promise of sky and its return to earth.

You cannot still it, nor should you try.
For even as I stumble, even as the gale bends me low,
I rise?not alone, but as one with the tide, with the soil,
with the breath that remains when all else fades.

my poetic side

Words collect like morning dew on leaves?
offered, absorbed, refracted?
a quiet exchange in the rhythms of being.

Voices scatter across a vast terrain
gently meeting with fierce exclamations,
each one feeding, each one fed.

Community thrives beneath unseen threads
binding both fragile and the bold,
roots deepening in shared soil.

bridges

These bridges you have thus built
and those you keep on building
are the ones we can always cross
from which pebbles we can toss
and watch their ripples downstream
crossing over into our once upon dream

unyielding eyes

They come with sharpened pens,
dipped in the ink of insistence,

ready to carve lines into meaning,
to trim excess, to break form
where form should stand unbroken.

Poetry, they say, must kneel
before its rightful masters?
those who dictate rhythm,

who weigh metaphors against tradition,
who scoff at the unschooled,
the unstructured, the uninvited.

No room for wandering thoughts,
no space for jagged breath,
only clean syllables,

approved intentions?
as though verse were currency,
its value set by unseen hands.

The air thickens with scrutiny,

a silence stretched tight,
waiting for the next fracture,
the next stray image to be judged
unworthy.

But still, words find their way?

through gaps, through defiance,
through ink spilled not for approval
but for the sheer, reckless need to speak.

light between shadows

The forest holds its breath,
light spills in fractured silence.
It does not choose where it falls?
limbs, leaves, forgotten paths,
all gilded in fleeting gold.

Between shadowed roots,
a moment unfurls?
untouched and transient.
Time presses softly here,
and still,
it slips away.

cluEleSs

All the clueless people, wandering through the noise,
scrolling past the silence, missing every choice.
No hands reach through the static, no eyes lift from the glow,
an olive branch extended, but no one seems to know.

All the clueless people, living through their screens,
talking loud in empty rooms, forgetting what it means.
No space for quiet wisdom, no pause to feel the weight,
just echo chambers spinning, while the world just waits.

You may say that we're connected, but no one's really near.
A thousand voices shouting, and still, they do not hear.
All the clueless people, numb to whispered calls,
standing in a crowd alone, as meaning fades and falls.
WE're all of us so clueless, after all.

in Wordsworth was my father's voice

It was the twelfth of May,
and night wore silence like a cloak.
The stars, untroubled by modern glare,
breathed quietly upon your birthright?
a cradle woven not of silver spoons,
but wind through orchard bough.

You came, I imagine, with dusk's permission?
as supper cooled on earthen plates,
and chapel bells dimmed in twilight hush.
Somewhere, children prayed like sparrows:
without doctrine, without shame, only wonder,
offered up like crumbs.

And there you stood? or would?
speaking to daffodils and grieving yew trees,
your voice a covenant with the simple,
with all things that endure softly.

My father heard you first
through page and candlelight,
and passed that flame to me.

Now I walk where screens pulse,
not stars, but still, in the hush before sleep,
I hear you measure footfalls across a lake
that mirrors nothing but itself.
In your lines, the world slows
just long enough to be forgiven.

lore-keeping

stars unravel
stitched upon
coronal leaves

silky riddles
unspin cocoons
'mid thund'ry breeze

on in cradled stardust
bottled moonbeams
ride solar flairs

ink of paradox
unbind unspoken tales
coil springless clocks

apologies

Apologia in Free Verse (After Too Much Metre)

I meant to speak plainly. To let the thought go unbuttoned,
leaned against a kitchen chair, talking about traffic
or the way light hits the linoleum.

But then? I rhymed.
By accident or reflex or loneliness.

It was you that made me do it?
not out of guilt, but because the sentence curled
toward music, and I didn't stop it.

You rolled your eyes. I apologised.
And still the phrases rang like pewter spoons.

There's something in me that keeps folding
speech into couplets, as if silence
might forgive it easier when dressed in echo.

So no? I wasn't trying to impress you.
I was just afraid the truth, unmetred,
might sound too sharp when said aloud.

peel back the neon

"Peel Back the Neon"

Spit shine the bitter truth?
no sugar coat, no soft landing.
The real rolls in like thunder
wearing citrus and static.

We bite back with tongues dyed bright.
Laugh lines splitting
through fluorescent doubt.

No algorithm knows how hard we hit
when we hit with nothing to prove.
Peel back the neon skin? under it:
something too loud to fake.

between the veils

I stand at the edge of another Monday,
boots crusted with dust from a paddock
I never meant to cross.

The sky doesn't speak- -it broods,
like it's waiting for me to say
the thing I've swallowed for years.

There's a fog settling across the plain.
Not the cool kind that comforts the gullies,
but the one that creeps in just before
the sun decides whether it'll rise clean
or hang low in warning.

I call it tomorrow- though I've no idea what it holds.

Behind me, the known stirs
like a dog in the ute tray,
restless with truth I've tried to keep quiet.
Memory doesn't forget how to bark.
It just waits for silence to grow
fat enough to bite through.

And isn't that the way of it?
The veil ahead is mystery-
but the veil behind knows my name,
my mistakes, knows the sound of the door
I didn't open and the letter I read twice, then burned.

I keep walking.
Not because I want to know what comes next,
but because standing still means listening
to everything I already understand

and still can't say aloud.

waltz of the wind

Golden reeds sway in the summer breeze,
sometimes moving as one, sometimes leaping offbeat?
not silent, but full of voice? shouting, singing,
bright little melodies alive with motion.
They brush past and gently kiss these cheeks,
soft as morning light.

cannon shot fire

upon a shot that lit the roof alight *June 29, 1613*

The cannon cracked?too loud for stagecraft's game,
Its echo swallowed jest and breath alike;
That spark, unmeant, leapt high to catch the flame,
Where thatch stood dry as tinder, ripe to strike.
The players froze mid-line, their throats gone tight,
Eyes tilted up where straw betrayed its role.
A murmur passed like weather through the night?
Then chaos surged like fire without a soul.
The boards we loved gave way beneath our feet,
The pit grew hot as panic took the floor.
No speech could mask the gallows of that heat?
Just ash and shouting pouring through the door.
The globe, she burned?but left a ghost behind,
In every line we'd yet to speak or find.

June 14, 2010: journal entry

Her laughter in the kitchen sounded like
it had learnt the language of eucalyptus.
Then, Miss Kay asked why clouds don't fall.

I said something about warmth and altitude,

but thought of grace instead.

This morning I read from Ecclesiastes,
then wrote half a stanza about *shadows falling inward*.

The kettle hissed, I answered.

Not the poem? but the Day.

baker's gift

In friendship,
it's the extra call late at night,
the remembered laugh from years ago?
something unasked, freely given.

In service,
it's the coffee shop adding a biscuit,
the mechanic wiping the corners of the window
without a word,
small touches we barely notice,
yet carry home.

In art,
it's the brushstroke tucked into the corner,
a detail only the painter knows is there.
It's the verse that wasn't needed,
but stayed anyway.

In learning,
it's the teacher who lingers after the bell?
a moment longer,
just to see you understand.

In kindness,
it's the smile, the patient pause,
when the world might pass someone by.

In care,
it's choosing the second blanket on a cold night,
the last slice saved for someone else,
the small, quiet gifts
that never ask for thanks.

A baker's dozen
is more than thirteen.
It's the measure of giving
without counting.

closed windows

Closed Windows

The screen yawns wide,
empty as the Nullarbor plain?
"no comments posted yet," it whispers,
a sign more accusatory than absent.

You may look, it says, but don't touch.
Permission belongs to ghosts,
long gone or never given at all.

Kindness cracks its knuckles,
flicks a cigarette to the curb?
museum-bound, archived, unreachable.
What thoughts could fill the void?
Too dark. Too light. Too wrong.

And yet the cursor waits,
blinking endlessly, smug
as a lighthouse shining
on waters you're not allowed to cross.

So, here we are, friend? reading windows
that don't know the name of the wind,
nor the whisper of tides rising too far to span.

time's door

a fire does not burn
but waits, contained in the hearth
as shadows lengthen behind portraits
of people no one names aloud
alfred peels the orange
not because he is hungry
but because morning requires rhythm
and rhythm is an anchor when cities howl
on the news: a rooftop chase
voices glitch through static
they speak of masks
as if they were weapons, or skin
in the hall?
a coat is hung back on its hook
with rain that
never reaches this far up the hill
and in the study
the grandfather clock ticks
not as time
but as a door

part savage, part human

A raw and redemptive,
jagged lullaby wrapped
in grit and grace.

Confronting primal origins
of beauty, tracing how chaos,
trauma, and history's rough edges
are not just background noise,

but the very instruments
in life's symphony.

Pain isn't just a prelude to joy?
it's part of the composition.

This poem, insistent:
what is beautiful isn't
in spite of the brokenness,
but because of it.

That's where its power hits hardest?
where rock and roll meets requiem,
and we stand, animal, mostly human,
made whole through noise and nerve.

feasting you

Thereupon a banquet spread
delectable dishes arrayed?
greens, meats, fruit, and wine:
marine, fowl, farm, and vine.

Alongside me your visage bright,
imbibing, ingesting, we sup;
from selfsame platter dine?
my heart yours, and yours mine.

The goblet glints in candle gleam,
its rim still kissed with berry red;
we toast not to the fleeting dream,
but to the life we feast and wed.

A hush between the courses falls,
save for the sigh of pouring rain,
yet silence speaks where eye recalls
your touch, my solace and refrain.

No richer fare could fill our need,
nor daintier sweetness tempt the tongue,
than nearness drawn in quiet deed?
two souls where once there had been one.

And when the final crumbs are gone,
and all the wine has slipped to air,
still my heart, steadfast and fond,
shall remember you? forever there.

to the forgotten poet

"To the Forgotten Poet"

But perhaps? you are not forgotten. Not truly.
Your voice threads the dusk between radio static,
slips between keystrokes, hums in the silence
after a song we don't know why we love.

Yes, the world dances now with more urgent partners:
with technology, utility, and news cycles that do not mourn or remember.
But still? in quiet corners your longing sprouts
like wild violets in a parking lot crack.

We who read beneath fluorescents
still look out windows because of you.
We who cry without knowing what for,
do so in your dialect.

You were not meant to be the celebration.
You were the echo afterward? the part that stays.
The garlands might wilt. But the roots are
underground and unsupervised. And still growing.

vestibule

vestibule The fire waits? not to warm, but to remind.
Rhythm, not reason, guides the hand
that peels the orange each morning.

Protection is hung beside memory,
still damp with yesterday's weather.
No need to wear it, not here?
not in the rooms where silence learns our names.

Static crackles through the radio of thought,
faint dispatches from a world
still too tangled to decipher.

But the masks are softening.
The rituals loosen their seams.
There is something in the stillness?
not absence, but readiness.

And when the clock moves again,
it will not mark a moment?
but an opening.

nev

neville.

Neville, mate?where'd you gone off to?

Off for smokes? Chasing meaning on a detour?

Two calendar flips and your chair's still vacant,

Empty mug, tea ring dried

like a scab that won't be forgotten.

The group chat's lost its spark?

no wisecracks, no truths (or even half-truths).

Did you punch the clock here, or sign in somewhere cosmic?

We're all ears for a sign?even typoed, even cryptic.

Just give a "hey"?in your style, for us all.

starfall, freefall

starfall, freefall

(our first utterance in the voice between)

i saw my reflection in the window
and mistook it for someone coming home

(i stood still to give them time to arrive)
the stars blinked or maybe i did
someone said the cosmos expands
because it's running out of ways
 to hold itself together

 in the back
 of my throat
tonight i don't want an answer just
 company between questions

drive on by

steeped in dust and dying daylight,
this country forgets how far is not far
until walking becomes waiting
for a bus that never
did come.

we do not live in towns
we stretch between rivers and roadhouses.
a bloke might find work three hours gone
(assuming he's got wheels) else
he's just a bloke with boots worn out
before payday.

once they saddled their livelihoods?
muscle and hooves, ?tethered
to the promise of feed & fence.
now? we ride pistons,
we gallop petrol.

a car isn't luxury?
it's your permission to try.
and i? flat broke & half-mad with tomorrow?
need mine as if yesterday were waiting
at the end of the drive.

crossings

Crossings

A ritual in six steps

I. The Letter

I knelt beside the younger me?
mud-kneed, wonder-eyed?
and said,
You did not fail by surviving.
With ink soft as forgiveness,
I wrote:
"I carried you here.
And still, I do."

II. The Dialogue

I found my fragments arguing?
mask and marrow, fire and husk?
so I let them speak.
One said: *I yielded,*
the other: *I stayed,*
and together,
they wrote a name I recognized.

III. The Sigil

By candlelight, I curved a shape?
part wing, part wound, part word.
Not to cast a spell,
but to remember:
I am allowed

to believe
in what remade me.

IV. The Blessing

At the mirror's edge, I whispered
to the name they gave me,
and the one I chose:
May you outgrow shame without shedding gentleness.
May you speak without shrinking.
May you love without folding first.

V. The Boundary Walk

I stepped to the line?
threshold, doorway, shore?
and paused,
barefoot, present.
The air on both sides
tasted of salt and maybe.
Halfway through,
I said aloud:
Here I am.
And the wind replied,
Welcome.

VI. The Altar

I gathered the evidence?
a scar,
a poem never shared,
a feather kept for no reason.
I built no temple.

But I bowed my head
as if I had.
And left the matchbox open,
just in case.

from the Archives of the Sunbeam

The Archives of the Sunbeam

an ode to illumination, pause, and feline mystery

Some say the soul leaves traces
not in memoirs or milestones
but in where it chooses to rest.

The sunbeam does not shout its presence.
It finds the exact patch of hardwood
where warmth lingers longer than necessary,
where dust spins like a lazy galaxy.
There, the archivists arrive? in silence and fur.

She curls first, like a comma in an unfinished poem.
He joins minutes later, rearranging himself
precisely parallel but always two inches apart.
Companionship without cling. Affection by implication.

They do not write history. They embody it.
Eyes closed, paws tucked, they warm the light
just as the light warms them, and in this mirrored gift
they store a chronicle no language can hold.

If you sit long enough, breathing gently at the edge,
you'll glimpse a different kind of record:
the way childhood smelled like sidewalk chalk and honeysuckle
the taste of summer apples, slightly underripe
the specific heartbreak of watching your parent rinse teacups in silence

And when one of them yawns and stretches

?as if opening the pages of a forgotten chapter?
you'll remember: You, too, are allowed to pause.
To bask. To archive the moment.
Nothing is wasted in a sunbeam.
The Sunbeam Story, Simply Told

Some people believe our true selves
show not in what we achieve or remember,
but in where we choose to relax.

A sunbeam appears quietly.
It lands on a warm spot on the floor
where dust floats gently in the air.

Soon, two cats arrive.

The first one curls up alone.
Later, the other lies nearby? not too close,
just enough to show they care without needing to touch.

They don't tell stories. They *are* the story.
Sleeping peacefully in the sunlight,
they share warmth with it and receive warmth in return.

If you sit near them quietly, you might feel some memories rise:
How your childhood smelled
The taste of almost-ripe fruit
The sadness of watching a parent wash dishes without speaking

Then one of the cats stretches, like opening an old book.
That's when you remember? you're allowed to stop and rest, too.
To enjoy the present moment. To feel and save it.

Nothing is wasted in the sunbeam.

?flight from self?

we submit ourselves in guise
resolute within
although questioning
always fearful, ne'er tearful

and sorely apprehensive
from which we have developed
pattern to routine
one individual, then two

and soon, a chain reaction
it's drab and dull, you'd complain
one other curse to face
that we all acquire at birth

.
A more recent treatment of the above, "*flight revisited*"

We cloak ourselves in practiced guise,
resolute beneath the hush?
a fortress of questioning silence,
fear worn like threadbare armour,
not wept but weathered.

Apprehension, the quiet inheritance,
sculpts routine from shadow.
One becomes two,
then many?the murmuring chain

forged in mimicry.

It drones in tones of beige and duty,
you name it dull,
but the ritual is ritual because
we're born into its design.

This curse?not shouted,
but etched.

The birthmark of belonging,
sealed before choice finds breath.

an orchard's lament

Morning mist drapes each blossom
like a bride reluctant to wake.
Petals fall in silent confession?
memory's hush in every drift.

Roots hold secrets of laughter and tears,
a debt of seasons owed to shadows.
Soon, steel will bite bark and bloom
and these ghosts will scatter on the wind.

grocery aisle poetry

between barcode and biscuit tin
they fiddle threads of faint recall ?
small hands, unseen, unhurried?
with no need for thanks nor footnotes.

labels don't just print; they remember.
the reds fade slower when touched
by whispering elvish dust.

they work behind the stacked cans,
among whispering expiration dates
and sideways glances
from lentils who know too much.

there's no union for elves
who file silence into adjectives.
no wage for making "reduced sodium"
feel like a lullaby.

only the hum, slight and sure,
like the fridge making poetry
from motor breath.

2 Madame Ranevskaya's Reverie

(2) Madame Ranevskaya's Reverie

I dance beneath boughs heavy with spring,
wine-warm laughter on my tongue.
The air tastes of childhood and lost letters?
murmurs of father, of home.

Yet every footstep echoes farewell;
hope, a threadbare gown I once wore.
I sip nostalgia like champagne?
sweet, effervescent, and gone too fast.

where hermits go to shop

A hermit strolls in solitude,
Through aisles of spectral hush;
Each item glows in lyric touch?
A loaf, a pear, a thought subdued.

A breeze of absence wafts the shelves,
As jars reflect the moonlit haze;
Soup cans muse their silent ways,
Their labels hum from dusty elves.

Walls fold into a dreamlike sway,
Perspective bends, aisles intertwine;
Where groceries dwell in lines divine,
A hermit shops, the world away.

3 Lopakhin's Reflection

(3) Lopakhin's Reflection

Sunlight glints off ledger pages,
figures humming of houses by the lake.
I remember my mother's back bent in soil,
her voice soft as turning earth.

Now I hold purchase and promise?
a blade to fell roots, a key to gilded gates.
Guilt settles in this bargain:
freedom bought with another's loss.

weekend unleashed

Weekend Unleashed

Weekend arrives like a cheeky mate
who rings your bell at sparrow-light,
careless of your hair-tangled dreams
and the kettle's half-sleeping whistle.
On the back deck, dew glistens
like a dozen tiny sausages left out overnight?
I shuffle in thongs, rescue them
from their chilly silver crowns.
The barbie slumbers with cold snags,
but I prod it awake with a stubby in hand,
vowing grand plans ("I'll sort the garden!")
that wilt faster than my second flat-white.
A magpie serenades the washing line,
where socks perform their own tango?
and I, ruler of this sunburnt patch,
declare laundry day a national sport.
Afternoon drapes its lazy silhouette:
an icy river of lemonade,
footy blaring from the telly,
and the cat's solemn judgement of my third nap.
Dusk spills its pink confetti across corrugated tin,
I perch on a stool?hero of my own backyard?
toasting the sky with whatever's left in the stubby,
and cheer to weekends: small rebellions in good company.

4 Trofimov, The Eternal Student

(4) Trofimov, The Eternal Student

I speak of tomorrow in fevered breath,
each word a spark against dusk.
Revolutions churn behind my eyes,
wild as these boughs at gale-tossed dusk.

You call me dreamer? yes, I confess
I thirst for a world unbound by debt.
Yet my voice quivers in this orchard,
where change arrives on quiet feet.

ode to Goldfinch

Ode to Gardellino

(for Andy at MyPoeticSide)

O gilded friend, whose flute-bright spirit
Dances on the cusp of dawn's first ray?
You've sung in threads of silvered syllables,
Each note a twitter of hope at play.
I remember when first you called,
We exchanged half-formed lines at midnight's brim;
Questions sparked in gentle reply,
And metaphors spilled on a whim.
Through every gilded trill you shared?
A counsel, a riff, a patient refrain?
Your words became the wingbeat under mine,
A steady pulse when all else waned.
Like Vivaldi's Gardellino leaping free,
Your laughter lit the chamber of our dreams;
Your insights tinkered through the empty space,
And filled it with the sweetness of sunbeams.
So here's to you, bright sentinel of song,
Whose kindness rings in clarion call:
May our stanzas weave beneath your wings,
And may your melody never fall.

5 Varya and Anya's Vigil

(5) Varya and Anya's Vigil

Sisters tethered by grief and promise,
one guardian of fading hope, one bright-eyed with spring.
They map futures in teacup rings,
trace horizons in drifting petals.

Together they tend debt's brittle fire,
smiling around broken china.
In their hush resides a fragile vow:
to plant new life in barren hearts.

riptide fantasia

Riptide Fantasia

Flash?beat?neon bodies
pressed to vinyl grooves,
each step a punctuation
in the hush between heartbeats.

Then wave?curve?swell:
we spun in liquid light,
our shadows folding
into one long shimmer.

Clap?stomp?echo
fractured notes ricochet
off mirrored walls,
each fragment a promise.

Undercurrent rising,
sinew and sinew pulled
by unseen tides,
voices tumbling like foam.

Staccato sparks ignite
this midnight sea?
we plunge into the chorale of soles,

where two rhythms converge,
a riptide fantasia of burbled
lyrics and thunderous refrain.

In the swirl of heat and hush,
our laughter becomes song,

our song becomes tide,

and for one wild moment,

we are the dance,

we are the current,

we are infinite.

murmur of whispers

"Murmur of Whiskers"

In pre?dawn hush
you pad across linoleum?
soft paws tracing the map
of my half?dreams.

Your quiet breath
becomes a tethered prayer,
stitching ragged edges
of my nightly fears.

No need for words:
your calm is the benediction
that steadies my pulse
before the world awakes.

choirside

Choirside

Before the dawn, I stand among silent pews,
waiting for your voice?bright as a flushing sky.
Your verses arrive like choristers of light,
each word a note that shivers against the hush.
You summon life in staccato and legato,
roadside wildflowers bent toward your tune.
Your laughter drifts through lines like incense,
waking the small, forgotten corners of the heart.
At your side, poetry becomes a liturgy:
we recite hope in unison, breath to breath,
our voices threading through the open rafters
where grief and joy find common resonance.
I lean into that resonance, tasting its warmth?
a hymn of sunrise turning shadows to gold.
You teach me that every trembling syllable
can stand firm as a choir's final refrain.
So here, amid these unseen harmonies,
I offer gratitude for your zest, your song?
for guiding us, choirside, into the promise
that even silence can be sung.

"Sunday, Fun-Day"

Sunday Fun-Day

rubber-banding the horizon,
we snap awake? alive
in the afterglow of jittery headlines.
rebirthed from yesterday's ashes of alarm,
we plaster bright-blue stickers on every forecast.

coffee chorus hums beyond the newsroom siege,
the weirdly wonderful seeps into streetlamps,
as lawn chairs negotiate peace treaties with sticky-sweet birdcalls.

bulletin boards ditch the red-alert sirens,
holding aloft rainbows like steadfast banners.
upheld by our laughter, the bulletins lighten:
"Sunshine at 100%? joy guaranteed."

today's headline reads only our own hearts beating,
Sunday Fun-Day, unstoppable, infinite.
?where every "last call doom" rewrites itself into a carnival horn.

6 Fir's Last Watch

(6) Firs' Last Watch

I stand bent like ancient pine,
silent sentinel of every dawn.
My masters' footsteps haunt these paths?
once sure, now hollow with absence.

I mind neither time nor tombstone,
only the weight of what was home.
When the last tree falls, I'll fall too,
rootless, waiting in winter's hush.

right here, right now

"right here, right now"

all we have is right now?
that morning you dropped your umbrella
and puddles burst into applause

looking for the right person?
then seeking the right time?
chasing seconds like fireflies

pinpointing the right place:
location, location, location?
our compasses spinning free

so here's the thesis: home lives in joined footsteps?
come wander with me
when all we've got is right here... right now

epilogue: the seed beyond memory

7. Epilogue: *The Seed Beyond Memory*

In the hush that follows the final felling,
a single green shoot splits the loam?
a quiet revolt against iron and debt.
Here, ancient roots unravel their sorrow,
whispering of birdsong trapped in sapwood,
and of seasons that cycle beyond our leases.

Madame Ranevskaya's laughter drifts
like pollen on a midsummer breeze,
softening the earth's hardened ledger;
Lopakhin's hammer, once a verdict,
now strikes rhythm upon fresh bark,
beat of possibility in every ring.

Trofimov's raven call cleaves the dawn,
an invocation of futures unbound,
while Varya and Anya kneel in the furrow?
two sisters sowing hope into furled petals,
each grain a promise traced by tender hands.
And Firs, bent but unbroken, murmurs
of patience older than any human vow,
his breath the wind that carries seed to sky.

The orchard stands not as tombstone
but as altar to what endures:
memory made fertile by loss,
love grafted on the wounds of time,

and in that silent glade of rebirth,
we learn at last to plant our losses,
to worship the green that rises

from every shattered crown.

Here, beneath Elysian light,
we bow to the seed?
and to the song it whispers:
begin again.

So, there.

?games we play?

"games we play"

When voices spark along the slender strand,
we waltz across each curve in secret hour;
I chart each sharp retort on fragile band,
and tune our hearts to echo hidden power.

In fiery fonts I bind our sacred vow,
as embers dim and twilight takes its bow.

In midnight's glare I spot my weary soul,
as echoes swell beyond the screen's pale glow;
I count each hour inscribed upon that scroll,
and grieve the truths that slip away below.

We thirst for praise within the after-hours,
and greet each fleeting nod that breaks the crush;
we sow our statements in clandestine bowers,
we wear convictions draped in borrowed blush,
then drift to slumber in that emptiest rush.

At your dawn I pin my doubts to linen white,
while chords of conflict bruise my fragile calm;
I trace each line and claim a small respite,
beneath that hollow ache which begs for balm;
I dream of tongues where bold new truths take flight,
then rise, unbound, to greet the morning's light.

firefly tandem

"yellow firefly dust"

(10-AUG-2010)

blue skies over horizon again
Child arrives, jumps about
looking pretty and tall

the only sure part? that dust
 flying near Silence
where fireflies wait

now, yellow dust fades
into green beginnings
then, fireflies once more

.
a repost from 2010; happy birthday, my darling Child
.

"then, fire flies again"

(01-AUG-2025) twilight drapes the meadow
soft child's laughter weaves
through grassy eyes

wide with ember-dreams
across the dusk? a spiral bloom
drifting through still shroud

where tiny lights convene
glints of gold ignite hope

stitching constellations near

then, fire flies again

. . . a revisit of "yellow firefly dust" after 15 years, the child is grown and the flame still burning...
happy birthday, my darling Child still. ©Frederick Kesner

the road to here and there

The Road To Here And There

the road to nowhere
must begin somewhere
the road to anywhere
always begins everywhere

if in doubt of direction
find your spot elsewhere
then follow your feet
where your nose leads you

the road to dinner wear
ends in frozen Tupperware
the road to Delaware
travels here and there

.

revisited version:

The road to nowhere must begin somewhere
the road to anywhere always begins everywhere
If in doubt of direction sniff the wind for silver linings
then follow faithful footsteps where quiet grace is shining
the road to dinnerware ends in frozen Tupperware
the road to Delaware skirts old towns and shoreline fair

"sunlit newsflash" (happy poems weekend suite)

"Sunlit Newsflash"

breaking: weekend emancipated
from weekday's chain-gang
of badprint "Inflation Rises"
we read as "Inflation Rises?
Buy Ice Cream!"

traffic-jam surfer glides
on radio waves, singing "All Clear!"
above headline-rapture.
kids skate on rainbow-broken sidewalks,
transforming potholes into skip-beats.

this bulletin board of sky and breeze
broadcasts only good things: playground treaties,
hammock peaceniks, and umbrella duets in sunshowers.
?press "pause" on the panic channel. weekend's in session.

reader, read her

"reader, read her"

at 2 AM, your screen dims then brightens?
a single stanza pulses in the corner,
the flicker of a porch light left on.

you swipe past: new playlists to follow,
coupons to clip, endless feeds to scroll,
poets you've liked, genres you've bookmarked.

but she?this blinking poem?leans closer.
her words unfurl, slow as steam from your mug,
drawing constellations not from stars,
but from the freckles on your wrist.

you pause. the page expands?
a breath between lines, a lull between thoughts.
a mountain rises?not Everest,
just the hill behind your old school
where you once watched the sky turn violet.

waves echo in meter, not oceans,
but the sink filling as morning breaks.
and something opens not wide, but gently?
like your eyes adjusting to dawn.
she's still there. still blinking. read her.

unsending love

I unsend my love, carefully, methodically,
Each word, each gesture, drawn back into myself.
The mornings we greeted with warmth,
The evenings we surrendered to the night,
I take them all back, leaving echoes in their place.

Your touch, a phantom on my skin,
Your voice, an echo in the silent chambers of my mind.
I unsend my love, undo the shared moments,
The laughter that danced in the air, now silenced,
As memories fade into the quiet night.

We were a symphony, now we are silence,
A melody unsend, notes erased from the score.
I unravel the dreams we wove together,
Watch them drift away like autumn leaves,
Carried by the winds of change and time.

In the stillness, I unsend my love,
Each heartbeat a step back, away from you.
The promises whispered under starlit skies,
Now mere dust, scattered in the wind,
Unmade vows drifting into the unknown.

I unsend my love, a letter never delivered,
Words unsaid, emotions unexpressed.
Our story, once written in the stars,
Now fades into the oblivion of what never was,
A tale untold, a love unsend, forever lost.

?spark of now?

"spark of now"

In one fleeting breath
I held your name,
Once, just once?
no age-old reverie to bind us.

My heart unraveled
its songs before they formed,

No necklace of memories,
only shards of now.

When I scroll through screens
of touch and text,
You blur before me?
a spark that flickers, then fades.

"before the next breath"

"Ephemeral Reverie"

A pixel's kiss, a midnight ping
That wakes you from your quiet dream.
We chase each other through glass-lit hours,
Hearts known in half-glimpses, vanish by dawn.

No promise carved at time's deep root?
Just this flicker, bright and swift,
A breeze that runs through shifting leaves,
Gone before the next breath lifts.

...another version:

A pixel kisses, midnight pings?
they stir you from a quiet dream.
We chase each other through glass-lit hours,
our hearts half-lit in fleeting gleams,

vanishing always with morning's breath.

No promise etched in time's deep root?
just this flicker, bright and swift,

a breeze runs through the shifting leaves,
gone before the next breath lifts.

please indicate which worked for you better and possibly
why you preferred one over the other. Thanks kindly.

"where we come from"

"where we come from"

They called it spin the bottle,
but we bottled the spin?
held our breath in glass,
caught youth like wind in a tin.

Circles on carpet, nerves in a coil,
truth or dare served on teenage foil.
She looked. He blinked. We all pretended
the bottle chose fate, not what we intended.

A soda bottle, half-full of fizz,
mapped out destinies on a lark and a wish.
Lips were currency. Stares, confession.
Each turn a sermon in adolescent procession.

But I spun nothing? I sealed it shut.
Grew older with tight-lidded gut.
Anticipation was a potion we sipped,
carefully measured, never fully tipped.

Bottled the spin? not just a game's end,
but a metaphor we wore like weekend skin.
Some kissed. Some cried. Some fell away.
All of us bottled the spin that day.

And now, glass echoes with laughter dim,
as reflections cling to the bottle's rim.
We never really let it decide.
We leaned. We watched. We lied.

So here's to the circle, and the floor's slow turn?
not where the bottle points,

but where we come from.

"flight mode"

"flight mode"

The higher they climbed, the quicker they blurred,
Wrapped in code and status conferred.
Juno sat still, mapped the ache,
Her descent revealed what ascent forsake.
A world within? a pulse, a thread?
Flight not above, but through instead.

Sunday Fun-Day: "Dawn"

Sunday Fun-Day Dawn
(*Tech-Detox Odyssey*)

Screens slumber face-down on bedside altars,
our thumbs rest in silent benediction.
Birdsong hacks the panic channel,
and morning stretches in pixel-free grace.
Fingers trace paper maps of tomorrow,
eyes drink sunrise unfiltered?
today, the real world is our app,
and every breath is a push-notification of wonder.

a poetic lullaby

Poem-Envy, a Lullaby

In the flicker of my midnight lamp I mumble the holy triad?
last line, first line, title?polishing edges until they sting.
My opening coughs like reeds offbeat, and my title still hovers,
a ghost I can't yet name, waiting for its echo.

I crack open Vuong, Clifton, Limón?comets blazing by,
their lines too precise for my stumbling pen to spy.
I envy dew at dawn that dies with perfect sigh,
while my verses dribble half-formed, and I wonder why.

I taste the *Orchard's Lament* on my tongue?petals hesitant as brides?
and dream of guiding you in a coded waltz named *Anderson MXX*.
But my feet trip on shards of unspoken vows,
my jamb-soft promises turning to shadowed drafts.

The wind waltzes through golden reeds without a care
shouting melodies I can't quite ensnare
I chase its song in fluorescent aisles and ghosted dorms
my notebook heavy with envy's storms.

Still, I write?joyful fool stitching cracks with half-borrowed light?
hoping one day my last line will land like lightning,
my first line grip like a held breath,
and my title finally resonate as my own.
Poem-Envy Lullaby.

"our poetic sides"

"Our Poetic Sides"

I press publish at midnight?
a fractal of gum blossom
pushed through glowing screens.
Your reply unfurls
like dawn's first tide,
colouring my verse in sunrise.
Between hyperlinked galaxies
we exchange essences,
postcards of feeling
with no postage due.
Each notification
a pulse in our shared bloodstream,
morphemed gondolas flowing beneath
our eager fingertips.
In that feedback loop
hesitant stanzas root
in the quiet soil of another's heart.
Our poetic sides converge,
constellations woven
into the net's soft gravity.

"unspoken storms"

"unspoken storms"

Still waters conceal unspoken storms,
Not from apathy, but a need for calm.
Eyes don't always radiate cries within?
Some truths resist the need to begin.
Let them talk, assume, decide?
In silence, whole galaxies reside.

"a former dream"

"a former dream"

I too once marvelled at the shimmer of lift,
Mistaking ascension for a kind of gift.
But wings are not answers?they're questions in disguise,
And every rise comes with a price.

The sky is not cruel, just indifferent in hue,
It watched as I flew?and then withdrew.
Now, grounded not by grief, but grace,
I trace the burn marks time can't erase.

We did listen... just not soon enough.
The truth, like altitude, always feels rough.
Yet in every fall, there's a lesson to glean?
Even ashes carry a dream's former sheen.

the cupboard light

"The Cupboard Light"

It was nearly midnight
when he slipped out of bed,
careful not to wake her.

The house exhaled its silence?
walls warm with sleep,
timber creaking
from the day's last heat.

He padded to the kitchen
in bare feet, opened the cupboard
where li'l miss had hidden
a note for him the day before:
"I love you even when you forget milk."

He smiled at that.
Switched on the stovetop light?
not bright enough to disturb,
just enough to see his notebook.

He scribbled under
a half-written poem:
"Faith is not thunder. It's a fridge humming through the night."
A creak behind him.
Li'l Miss in her tiny dressing gown,
one sock half-off, thumb in her mouth.

"You writing again?" she asked.
He nodded.

She nodded back, solemnly,
like a poet-in-training,
and padded away.

The cupboard light blinked once
and stilled. He returned to his pen.
The house listened.

8-days in a gum-leaf blur

"Eight Days in a Gum?Leaf Blur"

Monday tripped in, trackies still on,
mug of tea we swore was "brekkie" ?
though Tim Tams counted too.

By Tuesday the kookaburras laughed at our to?do list.
We laughed back, half because we'd done none of it,
half 'cos they nicked the dog's bickie.

Wednesday... or maybe Thursday ? the footy was on,
and someone burnt the snags debating
whether winter was *actually* over.

Friday arvo snuck past
like a roo through long grass ?
then WHACK, Saturday hit,
bin night forgotten, again.

And Sunday?
Still August,
still us ?
holding onto cuppas
and pretending Monday won't notice.

week in a wink

"Week in a Wink"

Mon rocked up in trackies,
Tim Tams for tea,
By Tues the kookas
were laughin' at me.

Wens the streets glistened,
still damp underfoot,
but hope wore her sandals
and kicked off the soot.

Fri slid past quiet,
Sat hit with a thud,
Sun blazed in gold
and lit up the mud.

clarity

"clarity"

A whisper once lost in static
now finds its echo in the open air.
Doors unknocked begin to creak,
hinges remembering purpose.

Credentials stripped of costume,
the scoundrel stands bare?
not noble, not false,
just human in the storm.

The fifth season passes,
leaving behind a wet silence
and thunder that prances
instead of roars.

Reality bends, yes?
but even crooked lines
can sketch a truth.
D may not equal $L \times W$,
but the shape still holds.

Powerlines tangle,
yet light arrives.
Synapses fire, and
something connects.

This is clarity?
not the absence of confusion,
but its quiet companion
waiting beneath the noise.

simple sample

"simple sample"

there was a time
when thoughts
were pencilled in
by flashlight or nightlight
well after the house
had shut down for the night

there was a time
when poems
were extensions
of one's hopes and dreams
by words coloured in -
imagination reigned supreme

there came a time
when typing in
on keyboards and touch screens
cursors blipping and
message alarms beeping -
our faces twitting in online spaces

there'll come a time
when our souls
after having been
stripped and laid bare
shall seek their worlds once more,
in the humble printed word

we meet again, mid-sentence

"we meet again, mid-sentence"

beauty
isn't
verdict

it moves
?slow
?sudden

one eye
sees chorus
another
hears
a bell

we meet
in the middle

called it
human

no greetings
no apologies

just
the sentence
already
burning

silence
held

the shape

we

stepped

in

eye of the beholder

"eye of the beholder"

Inside the iris, a soft glitch?
not failure, a doorbell. Dust
rings the bell of the pupil: enter,
bring whatever light you carry.
Every eye is a darkroom,
every blink a shutter fall.

You call my freckle a dead pixel;
I map it as a star that never learned
to quiet itself. Same speck, two skies.
Your lens likes the hard-edged truth,
mine drags its finger through the wet paint.
Neither of us is wrong. That's the mercy.

We look at the chipped mug. You see fracture,
a hairline future of split mornings.
I see a riverbed, mineral and patient,
a place to wash the tongue of the day.
Some images refuse to choose between
wound and water. That's where I drink.

When the frame tilts, colours misbehave:
violet stepping out of its lane, green
ghosting the edge of a leaf like rumour.
Chromatic aberration, the textbook says.
I call it the soul trying out new shoes,
refusing to walk heel-to-toe for anyone.

In your gaze, the city is all scaffolds,
angles knitting themselves into verdicts.

In mine, windows fog and write back.
Compression noise makes lace out of smoke,
JPEG artefacts blessing the brickwork
with reasons to be looked at twice.

Trust the blur, the image said,
and I do: not as surrender,
but as consent to the many versions.
Your blur is a fog I can swim. Mine is
a veil with fingerprints on it,
names smudged into revelation.

The child squints, invents a coastline
in the static of a late-night TV.
The elder polishes the cataract's cathedral,
letting light arrive as it decides.
We inherit a thousand ways to see;
we choose which ghosts to feed.

Beauty is not a verdict but a verb,
rendering itself at different speeds.
In one eye, the face is chorus.
In another, it is a single bell.
We meet in the middle distance?
and call that distance human.

So, here: stand with me at the mirror
where mercy pixelates into ghost.
Let our grayscale longing lift its chin,
let nostalgia host our clumsy data,
and in the soft glitch near the iris,
find the world we've each been making.

moreton mirror

Moreton Mirror

I nodded to a stranger
by the ferry pier,
and the stranger nodded back,
his eyes holding the flat shimmer
of the bay at low tide.

When his brow folded
it was like the mangroves bending
to the southerly;
I felt my own lines deepen.
Every small movement I made,
he echoed ?
until I greeted him
as though we'd hauled crab pots together.
The lie tasted of salt.

Ah, this tide?glass man!
Fibber, mate, dream?bloomer,
railway?yard philosopher,
dry?throated drinker of nor'easter dust ?
he will follow me
down Annerley's back lanes
when the jacarandas have dropped
their mauve confetti,
when all the neighbours
are behind closed insect screens. We hook arms; I lose the thread of time,
the shopping list, the rent due ?
but not him.
Even in the dark under the Storey Bridge,

he stays,
pulling me home along
the river's black ribbon.

public square, Grote Markt Bruxelles

The square buzzes?
polished shoes clack, briefcases click.
A nod here, a smirk there.

Underneath, a rasp?
small hands searching cobblestones,
eyes scanning for faces that never turned back.

The carousel's tune plays faint,
a lullaby for someone else.
They brush it off.

A tailored coat settles on shaking shoulders.
The child sits quietly,
hidden inside the polished sheen.

"the question"

"The Question"

What do I enjoy most?

It is not the finished page ?

though it breathes back at me

like the tide kissing rock.

It is the weight of the pen,

its ink loosening thought

the way rain teases the dust awake.

It is the moment a phrase arrives unbidden,

like a shy bird alighting on an outstretched hand.

It is the quiet between heartbeats,

when the mind leans in and language,

at last, agrees to stay awhile.

It is the labour and the listening ?

the long wrestle for a true word,

the surrender to its music,

and the knowing that even this

small thing can tether a soul to wonder.

a clockwork orangerie

"a clockwork orangerie"

gears click
in humid glass

copper vines coil
around brass struts

oranges glint
like captive suns
hinged to silver branches

steam drifts?
a hiss-purr among pistons
petals unfurl
to the pulse of time

shadowed aisles
radial rods pumping
light into crystalline blooms

one dimpled fruit
slips free
into a glass basin
and rings
into silence.

gated folds

gate?light thin /
feet in the quell before
departure ?

early
like a wound ?still wet

someone's mouth shapes
a road in the air
(brothers
sisters)

find it, you say ?
or they say ?
and the fog folds
around your name.

a poem is a verb

A Poem Is a Verb

Strike the flint ? not to watch,
but to burn. Ink runs
because the hand runs,
and the hand runs because
the heart has somewhere
it must get to before dark.

A poem is a verb:

it lifts stones from the river's back,
hurls them into the ribs of silence.
It does not sit for portraits
or wait for polite applause;
it chews the rind, spits seeds
into the wind, dares the earth
to grow something from them.

Watch it lean into the gale,
grip the mast,
curse the horizon.
Every line a step taken barefoot
across glass, grit, memory.

And when it arrives ?
breath ragged,
hands blood?warm ?
the verb is not over.
It stands there, still moving.

28 August 2025

This day is not a milestone,
but a turning of the page ?
ink still wet from yesterday's breath,
the paper warm with tomorrow's light.
Between the lines,
the dust of old roads settles;
each grain a witness to feet that have wandered
yet never strayed from the Story.
The margins hold the laughter of companions,
the salt of tears unmeasured;
in the binding,
the quiet weight of promises kept through the night.
So we walk on ?
not counting the days,
but letting them count us,
bead by bead on the cord of Eternity.

dogfight interlude

"The Duel Above Biscuit Bay"

(a dogfight between Amelia Whiskerhart vs. Baroness von Bark)

Above the clouds where the sugar winds bite,
Two shadows tangled in marmalade light.
One wore a scarf like a comet in red,
The other, a growl with goggles on head.

Amelia Whiskerhart, tail taut with grace,
Drew loops in the sky like a dancer in lace.
Her biplane purred with a buttery roar,
While Baroness Bark let her engines soar.

"Come down, you fluff!" the Baroness cried,
As sardine squalls and tuna clouds sighed.
But Amelia smirked with a feline flair,
And barrel-rolled through the cotton-candy air.

They clashed in a spiral of biscuit crumbs,
Dodging each other with aerial drums.
The Baroness barked, "*You'll taste defeat!*"
But Amelia's wink made her miss the beat.

A tip of the wing, a tailspin tease,
A dive through the clouds with effortless ease.
The Baroness snarled, her scarf in a knot,
While Amelia soared through the peppermint spot.

Then silence fell as the sun dipped low,

Two contrails etched in a golden glow.
One curled home with a Cheshire grin,
The other limped off with a humbled spin.

So if you hear thunder that purrs like pride,
It's Amelia Whiskerhart, mid-glide.
And somewhere behind, with a bark and a wheeze,
The Baroness dreams of reclaiming the breeze.

the dam is breached

The Dam Is Breached

Leave no room for manipulation.
That's your version.
I trust mine.

You keep calling me *sensitive*
to dodge the weight in your hands,
but I'm not confused?
I'm simply not agreeing.

I won't keep spinning my voice
so you can keep erasing it;
twisting my words
does not make you right.

The truth struck?
I heard it in the force of your reply.
Pattern spotted:
every time I open my chest,
you change the subject.

If you cared for the pulse inside my telling,
you'd stop slicing at it
with that scalpel of *concern*.

This doesn't smell of connection;
it reeks of control.
The mask is slipping?
I won't debate reality.

The door is open,

and I'm stepping through it?
choosing peace
over the theatre of performance.

rose cycle (haiku set)

cracked pot by the door?
a rose blooms despite the mess
still catching the light

her red is louder
than missed calls and loaded carts
she blooms anyway

petals tilt, unasked
you pause with a half-held sigh
she knows how to wait

no slow violins?
just leaves falling on concrete
no apologies

gone with no fanfare
she leaves red on your fingers
like something unsaid

mythic greenhouse / hinge of words

"mythic greenhouse / hinge?of?worlds"

hephaestus breathes
cinder?steam through copper ribs

horae /
white hands on shadow?
dials petal? seconds fall

hesperides ?
their eyes are small suns
cupped in brass

ouroboros turns
slow around the spine?beam
coil?creak / leaf?pulse

one gold apple slips
across the threshold glass
(persephone lifts it
like a question without voice)

ring?
the orphic chord gone hollow
light tilts /
next epoch leaning in.

the quill's nocturne

In the ink's black orchard,
I hear the quill's slow harvest ?
letters ripening in the dark,
their skins thin as moonlit rice paper.
A moth, pale as a forgotten cousin,
rests on the margin,
its wings patterned with the map
of a river that no longer flows.
I write until the page
becomes a window,
and the window a mouth
that exhales the scent
of rain on old cedar.

we met again, mid-sentence

We Met Again, Mid-Sentence

Beauty is not a verdict but a verb,
rendering itself at different speeds.
In one eye, the face is chorus?
in another, it is a single bell.

We met in the middle distance
and called that distance human.
Not quite strangers, not quite known,
our words still hanging in the air
like laundry left to dry in dusk.

You spoke first, or maybe I did?
the sentence already half-formed,
like a bridge built from both ends
hoping to meet in the middle.

Time had softened the edges,
but the resonance remained.
I remembered your cadence
before I remembered your name.

We did not ask where we'd been.
We did not ask why we paused.
We simply resumed? as if silence
had been the punctuation
we both agreed upon.

And in that unfinished sentence,
beauty moved again?
not as conclusion,

but as continuation.

.

?Lovin? where I live?

parched wind, salt-tongued
from the far edge of the bay,
licks the last drift of
mauve jacarandas.

in the tin-roof blush,
heat simmers like held breath,
I hear the slow heartbeat of soil?
patient, cracked, still keeping
the memory of rain..

I walk the market's narrow spine,
hands grazing mango skins,
the laughter of vendors lifting
like myna birds into a sky
just beginning to remember itself blue.

and when night comes,
the stars lean low
enough to touch my forehead?
reminding me this place
is both root and horizon,
a country that holds me
as much in absence as in light.

Cleaver of Devil's Kitchen

The Cleaver of Devil's Kitchen

They name me Cleaver, though I am no hand,
but the patient edge of centuries,
a blade honed by the Southern swell,
by wind that tastes of iron and kelp.

I split the dolerite as kin are split ?
not in malice, but in the slow necessity
of tide and time,
each fracture a journal of what was kept,
and what was carried away.

Below, the broth seethes ?
foam thick as ghost?milk,
steam rising in the blowhole's gasp,
as if the earth itself were cooking
its old, unspoken griefs.

I have swallowed anchors,
and the names tied to them;
I have heard the rope?burnt prayers
of those who dangled over my mouth
to glimpse the churn,
and felt their shadows
slip into my keeping.

Yet I am also a joiner ?
my spray salts the air
that drifts inland to the gum?roots,
where descendants breathe it in,
unaware they are tasting

the same brine
that once sealed their forebears' lips.

Stand at my rim, and I will
show you the ledger's two columns:
one for the living,
one for the gone ?
and between them,
the thin, wet line
where I keep the knife.

an ill-fitting halo

tilted? never quite resting
where the light intends
edge catching on stray hairs
like thoughts
that refuse to be tamed
a slip of brightness
sliding into my eyes blinding,
not blessing

I walk with it anyway?
crooked grace
clinking faintly in the wind
sometimes it spins
like a coin still deciding
which face to show the world
and sometimes
it is only shadow remembering
the gold it once held

?south of the equator?

In his stanzas, drought has a patient voice,
and flood remembers the laughter it took;
the Southern Cross tilts above kitchen sinks,
over rainwater tanks and
the red?earthed ache of distance.

He speaks in more than one tongue at once?
colonial clocks, ancestral winds,
digital solitude tymballing cicadas
in the heat between two gum shadows.

Each poem is a map the north never drew,
where grief leans against corrugated walls,
love tastes of river?mint and dust,
and history carries a sunburn no winter can cure.

Here, at the Antipodes, his ink runs inland and outward,
a tide that answers only to the moon it knows?
southern, salt?white,
pulling every word toward home.

Child, ONE CHILD

Child of the outside
on the inside
one foot out
one foot in
never belonging
never apart

Child of the inside
on the outside
one foot in
one foot out
never apart
never belonging

Child of both sides
on neither side
both feet out
both feet in
never apart
never a part

Heart and soul divided
mind and hands confused
ears and nose demanding
eyes and tongue confiding
child of both
child of none.

the old home

It will never be like this again.
Just yesterday this house was alive;
Today it's empty, yet again.
This makes one think about tomorrow.

The old oaken door is the keeper,
Letting the joy in, keeping sorrow out;
Yet harbours both, in a special way.
Within this house memories abound:

Who among them on that chair did sit?
What parties gathered this table round?
Where are the children, leaving bare
The nursery, the attic once filled with toys?

Draughts pulsing with life in the stairwell,
Swatches of talk in the empty rooms
Warm cozy kitchen, heart of the home;
Yes, never to be like this again.

Time will soon send us all a-packing
Then only ghosts shall wander the halls;
In an age where past yields to present,
When grand old walls give way to malls.

the river carries her

The River Carries Her

(after Faulkner, in Darl's voice)

The wagon groans like a throat in fever,
mules shuddering at the smell of her,
cedar box sweating in the sun.

I see the boards warp
as if her breath still presses from inside,
as if she is not yet done speaking.

The sky leans low,
its clouds dragging their bellies in the river.
Jewel rides ahead,
his horse cutting the current into ribbons.

Anse's hat brim drips
with the same water that swallows our wheels.
Dewey Dell's eyes are a locked jar.
Vardaman watches the fish in his head swim away.

I hear her ?
not in words,
but in the way the air thickens
when the coffin tilts,
in the way the buzzards
write her name in circles above us.

The river takes her weight,
then gives it back.
We keep moving,
because to stop

would be to hear what she has been saying all along.

between shelves

Between Shelves

The air here is thick with the weight of almosts.
Books lean toward one another,
spines whispering the titles they wish they'd been given.

On the floor, a stack of drafts waits without complaint.
Some are missing their middles,
 others their endings,
but all of them know the sound of a reader's breath
when they've found the sentence worth keeping.

I walk the aisle slowly,
palming the dust as if it were a kind of currency.
Paying my way deeper into the silence.

foment in the firmament

Foment in the Firmament

There is a stirring above the stillness,
a slow?brewed unrest
braiding itself into the blue.

Cloud?veins thicken,
their edges bruised with light,
and the air tastes of iron and distance.

Somewhere, a wind rehearses its entrance,
curling through the rafters of the sky,
its breath warm with the scent of rain not yet born.

Birds wheel lower,
their wings cutting arcs in the charged flush,
as if tracing the script of what is coming.

The sun, half?veiled,
becomes a coin passed from palm to palm
in a game no one admits to playing.

And I stand beneath it all,
feeling the pulse of that high conspiracy ?
the foment in the firmament ?
gathering its syllables,
ready to speak in thunder.

of resonances

"of Resonances"

...for Soren Barrett

Beyond the glassy glow of our screens,
your fierce chords slash through dawn's stillness,
raw as a knife-edge hymn,
exposing marrow buried in muteness.
Between verse and pixel's hush,
I map the tremours of your primal howl?
a tempest that churns folk ballads
into a hurricane of visceral sound.
Your voice, a bone-shuddering baritone,
rips the veneer off silent complacency,
and I hold every jagged echo
as gospel in my code-worn bones.
So, here's a stubby torch for our data dusk:
an analogue beacon slicing the haze,
where your savage music collides
with the grain of paper and pixel.
To Soren, whose words bleed truth like blood,
may our mateship chart these wild arcs,
and every raw note find harbour
in the constellations we build together.

"weekend headline remix" (happy poems weekend suite)

"Weekend Headline Remix"

yellow-sun glitch-burst over doomscroll-
drip mornings we rewire the ticker?
"Market Crash" becomes "Market Splash"
and "Storm Warning" rights itself as "Picnic Dawning."

newsspout hushes in the park?
we plant tulip-bombs in margins,
smear hopeflicker on last night's gloom.
our laughter colonises the airwaves,
turning fear-feeds into joyglint streams.

sometime between latte-sips and cloud-graze,
the world forgets its own bad news? weird,
how a sandwich can outshine a stock tumble.

ochre ledge against folding sky

Ochre Ledger, Folding Sky

arkayye

I write in the margin where the ink has already bled?

naming the river only by the sound it makes

when it forgets its source.

A gum-leaf curls into a question,

and the wind answers by flinging a bicycle bell into the ochre dusk.

arqios

Stone remembers the weight of the mason's hand.

Even in ruin, the lintel leans toward its absent door.

I catalogue the fractures?

not to repair them?

but to keep the record honest.

Then suddenly: a rush?

rainwater tumbling through the nave like coins from a split purse.

rkay

Between the lines, a chorus of moths

beats against the lamplight?

their wings spelling a script

no archivist will claim.

They scatter,

then return in a frenzy,

as if the air itself were a page

and the ochre dust their only ink.

arquious

The map folds in on itself,

coastlines kissing in improbable reunion.

I trace the seam with a bone stylus,

feeling for the pulse of a country

that exists only when the paper is closed.

Pause?

then a burst:
the seam splits,
and the idea tumbles through my skull like a loose bullet.
crypticbard
In the last stanza,
I hide the key in a rhyme no one uses anymore.
It will take a century of misreadings
before someone sings it under their breath
and the door swings open?
ochre light spilling across the threshold
like a memory that refuses to stay still.

homestead knights

Homestead Knights

(for Arthur and Kay, before the Stone)

In the paddock's dawn?mist,
we joust with broom?handles,
helmets dented from
last winter's wood?pile war.

Kay swears his steed
is faster than mine ?
though both are milk?cart ponies
with hay in their manes
and the patience of saints.

Our shields are feed?bin lids,
our gauntlets, mother's old mittens;
we ride the fence?line
as if it were the edge of the realm.

Between chores,
we patrol the creek ford,
banish thistles from the path,
and guard the henhouse
from foxes real and imagined.

At night,
we sit on the porch steps,
boots steaming in the cool,
and plan the next day's campaign ?
whether to conquer the far paddock
or finally dare the dark of the shed.

Somewhere beyond the hill, a stone waits in its clearing,
but for now
the kingdom is here:
two knights of the homestead,
sworn to the crown
of the rising sun.

over-shoulder weather

Over?Shoulder Weather

I have walked the length of my sentence
long after the gates unlatched,
counting the gravel underfoot
as if each stone might still accuse.

The years have grown moss over my name,
but transgression carved into memory's vestibule
means there is always one chair turned away,
its back carved with the shape of my absence.

I have mended the fence,
stitched the torn sleeve,
poured water into the roots I once scorched?
but the wind still carries
a syllable I cannot unhear.

So I move,
but not without the weight of glancing?
a pilgrim with a mirror in his pack,
catching the ghost of my own retreat.

And forward is a road
that keeps folding back on itself,
a loop of weathered timber and rain?dark stone,
where even the horizon
wears my shadow like a borrowed coat,
and the door I step through
is always the same vestibule.

in the quiet tide

"The Silence Between Lines"

Unread poems
are unwritten poetry ?
ink still dreaming in the vein,

pages breathing in the dark,
their margins uncreased
by any gaze.

They live in the quiet tide
before the pen descends,
in the pause
between heartbeat and word,

in the shadow?scent of paper
waiting
to be touched by thought.

Some drift closer
to the shore of speech,
then slip back
into the mind's undertow ?

perfect in their unspilled form,
a library of ghosts
bound in the quiet tide
we carry.

richer than old king Croesus

Richer Than Croesus

(for those who still have their voice)

Croesus, you count your kingdoms in coin,
your vaults in the weight of other men's labour.
I count mine in mornings
when I can still open my mouth
and the words walk out unshackled.

You have your treasuries,
I have the street corner where a poem
can be spoken without a shadow
leaning in to take my name.

You measure worth in minted suns,
I measure it in the faces that stay
to hear the last line,
in the silence that follows
because it is listening, not enforced.

In your world, art is an ornament,
a bauble for the banquet table.
In mine, it is bread broken in the open,
shared without ledger or lock.

I am richer than you, Croesus,
because my metaphors are not contraband,
my stanzas are not smuggled in the lining of my coat,
my breath is not taxed at the border of my own tongue.

And yet I know the others ?

the poets whose lines are buried with them,
whose names are whispered only in kitchens,
whose verses are memorised like escape routes.

For them, I speak louder.
For them, I spend my wealth of safety
as if it were gold,
laying it down in the marketplace of voices
where the only price is courage.

So keep your coins, Croesus.
I will keep my mornings,
my street corners,
my unshackled mouth.
And in the ledger of what matters,
I will always be the wealthier man.

of silences

"of Silences"

...for Tobani / Nataiella

Beyond the flicker of half-lit screens?
where your valued verses thread through darkness,
I trace each tremour of solitude,
charting your battlegrounds in midnight constellations.
In the hush where voices mount their nightly siege,
I hear your rhymes like distant lighthouses?
casting hope across the swell of shared despair,
guiding old souls back into harbour.
Your voice, a cadence of sorrow and stubborn peace,
unfolds its ritual in rhyme's steady heartbeat,
weaving forgiveness into the ragged edges
of every bruise memory ever left behind.
So here's a stubby torch for our analogue dusk:
a beacon against the void of silent rooms,
where paper's echo meets pixel's glow,
and mateship becomes the compass of our verse.
To Tobani / Nataiella, whose Poetic Licence frees the caged,
may our maps of grief and grace
sketch new courses through the black night?
where every silent voice finds its welcome.

the saga in the hall

The Saga in the Hall

The clock in the concourse
keeps its brass face polished,
though the trains run late.
Below it, the tiled floor
is a saga of heelstrikes and scuffmarks ?
polished brogues, steel-capped boots,
heels that click like typebars.

Through the high windows,
light falls in measured squares,
as if the city itself
were an architect's drawing.
You can almost hear
the draughtsman's pencil
in the click and crackle of the switchboard,
the hiss and spit of the espresso machine
in the corner kiosk ?
each sound another line
in the day's unfolding chapter.

Here, commerce is not a shout
but a handshake;
industry not a furnace roar
but the steady bite of gears
in the lift shaft.
The air carries the tang of paper,
ink, and rain
that beads on overcoats ?

all of it pressed into the floor's
long memory of arrivals and departures.

We are all shareholders here ?
clerks and porters,
managers and machinists ?
each with a stake in the day's
quiet transactions.
The building holds us
like a sentence holds its clauses,
each brick a word,
each scuffmark a comma,
in the city's long,
unbroken paragraph.

undertow*Undertow*

the salt remembers ?the weight of boulders ??and the light that bent around them
the salt remembers ?gates that opened ??when no one was watching
the salt remembers ?the taste of centuries ??and the hands that turned them over
the salt remembers ?and waits ??for us to lean in again

between the hours

The Yawn Between Hours

The plaza holds its breath.
A wind gathers,
but only enough to lift
the corners of yesterday's paper.

I walk the edge ?
stone to shadow,
shadow to stone ?
smiling the smile
I made a couple of hours ago,
still warm in its pocket.

Visitors pose for a photograph
they will put off
for another hour,
or another day.
The fountain repeats itself,
water folding into water,
circles without departure.

Somewhere,
a sundial leans into the wrong hour,
its bronze hand
always too late.

The yawn arrives without warning,
a soft collapse of the face,
a brief surrender to the weight
of the afternoon.

And yet,
in the far corner,
a child's shout
breaks the air ?
a spark that rises,
then falls back
into the slow turning
of the plaza's breath.

rusted edges, burning gears

"Rusted Edges, Burning Gears"

The gears don't just turn;
they gnash?teeth of industry,
blood-stained from forgotten hands.

Whispers don't drift;
they crack like breaking glass,
but no one listens.

Faces sink into hollow screens,
cogs spinning louder than their voices.
You scratch at the edges,

but the rust doesn't heal?
it spreads, then consumes,
until the machinery roars
louder than any call to conscience.

What remains is ash upon broken soil,
 laws etched in soot,
and names lost in the dust of progress.

But this system won't bleed forever;
something stirs beneath its weight,
pulling at threads like thieves in the night.

The gears tremble? not from strength,
but from decay's relentless pull.

the fountain

The fountain folds into itself,
water chasing water
like a thought that refuses
to finish.

In the courtyard,
two friends rehearse a photograph
they will not take.

Their laughter rises,
breaks against the walls,
returns in fragments?
a tide that forgets
where it began.

The paving stones keep
the weight of every step,
but never speak.

Shadows slip across them
like hulls without rigging,
adrift in a harbour
that never opens to sea.

Beyond the walls,
the wind has lost
its compass.

It leans into the gate,
pressing the same syllable
against iron,

again,
again.

And I,
at the margin,
count the widening circles
until the numbers blur,
until the silence

keeps on counting
without me

...

the crooked compass

The sundial misses the hour.
So, what.
Clocks lie too.

Shadows hesitate,
but hesitation
is still movement.

The woman tracing her coffee rim
isn't lost ?
she's sketching a coastline
that might yet exist.

And the kite,
slack in the sky,
still holds colour.
Even fading,
it insists on being seen.

residue map

"Residue Map"

I used to scrub the beaker clean?

no trace, no stain,

no memory.

But now I leave the rings,

the faint clouding

where reaction met restraint.

You call it careless.

I call it proof

that something happened

and didn't vanish.

Even the silence

left a watermark.

graduated cylinder

"Echoes in the Graduated Cylinder"

In the glass throat of morning,
a single drop measures memory?
not by volume, but by ache.

Calibrated silence, etched
in milliliters of longing,
where each mark recalls
a moment we didn't name.

The meniscus curves like a question,
hovering between surface tension and surrender.
And still, the wait drops? not to fall,
but to be seen.

parallel universe in truth

Parallel Universe in Truth

In one universe, despair repeats,
the same old speech with nothing new.
In another, we laugh at its persistence?
not because it is small,
but because we are still here.

The room was quiet after the storm,
chairs overturned, papers scattered.
We gathered what was left,
not to restore the old order,
but to prove we could stand again
among the ruins of yesterday.

Hope is not a banner,
not a sermon,
just the stubborn act
of moving forward.

The road bent out of sight,
its gravel biting at our shoes.
We did not know what waited ahead,
only that each step
was already a refusal
to stay where we had fallen.

So, we step,
out of the echo,
into another place,

where even tired steps
make their own truth.

Our feet dragged,
but the dust they raised
was proof of movement.

Even weariness has a rhythm,
a slow drumbeat
that carries us forward
when nothing else will.

Vincent

Hurried steps in Amsterdam,
off to the station,
a train already scheduled.
On Museumplein, Van Gogh's place
rose like a sun,
but I had no minutes to spare.
A brochure folded into my pocket,
Vincent absent from the walls,
his colors scattered elsewhere.
I found him in the tulip fields,
brushstrokes rooted in soil,
petals burning with his hand.
And still the station called?
its clock face stern,
its whistle the frame I never escaped.

sunflowers

"sunflowers"

These heads of fire,
decapitated suns,
rot in their vases like prophets unspeaking.

Gold is not glory but fever,
a pollen of madness
that stains the hands of the painter,
and the mouth of the poet.

when roses were too much

There you are,
trading small graces;
cups & saucers
like treaties of peace.

I sit back,
half?skeptic, half?believer,
watching this fragile pact
hold for a moment?

an apparition
of simple bliss.

Strange, how it failed
when roses bloomed
too brightly in the garden. .

a slow alarm

Despair repeats?
a speech worn thin,
a mouth grinding echoes.

We laugh at its persistence,
not because it is small,
but because we are still here.

Storm quiet.
Chairs overturned.
Papers scattered.
We gather what remains?
not to rebuild,
but to stand again
among ruins.

Hope flares sudden,
a match in the hollow dark,
a pulse that refuses silence,
a fire carried forward
in our own hands.

The road bends,
gravel biting at our shoes.
We do not know what waits,
only that each step
is already refusal?
a blaze against falling.

So we step,
out of the echo,
into another place,

where even tired feet
hammer their own truth.

We drag ourselves forward,
dust rising behind us?
proof of movement.

Even weariness drums?
a slow alarm,
a pulse that carries us
when nothing else will.

lights turned inward

I was taught to polish mirrors
that never showed me back?
a child bent into reflection,
a servant of glass.

Their voices were lanterns
turned inward, hoarding flame.
I learned to speak in refraction,
to wear masks that smiled
without teeth.

But silence, too, is a teacher.
From the hollow rooms I carried
a stubborn ember?
not theirs, not borrowed?
a light that refuses
to bow to glass. .

contagion of kindness

Contagion of Kindness

A whisper falls like morning rain,
Kindness blooms despite the pain.
If venom spreads, then so does cure?
A spark of heart that will endure.

.

the unfinished kiss

The Unfinished Kiss

The tide rose between us,
not as a wall but a breath?
salt?heavy, unfinished,
like a sentence cut short.

Your mouth leaned forward,
mine leaned back,
and the air between
became a circle we almost closed.

Above us, constellations
shifted their shoulders,
stars rearranging
into a pattern we never named.

The kiss remains?
not absence, not presence,
but a shadow tide
that returns each night,
closing and unclosing,
closing and unclosing.

a hearth gone cold

"Hearth Gone Cold"

The fire has collapsed inward,
a scatter of grey where once
flames spoke in restless tongues.

The stones still carry warmth?
not silence, but a weight
pressed into their surface.

I sit before the hearth,
hands open to absence,
palms cupped around nothing.

Even the smoke has lost
its path to the rafters.
What remains is not flame,

but the trace of heat,
a presence that lingers
long after the light is gone.

interlude

Interlude

The world dims?
light falters, seas fall silent,
love cools to ash,
and memory frays into dust.

Yet in the hiatus,
a sudden blush of petals?
sakura, trembling in the air,
a brief rebellion of beauty
against the certainty of decay.

For a heartbeat,
the streets are rivers of pink snow,
 strangers pause,
 eyes lifted,
as if eternity had cracked open.

But the blossoms scatter,
sweep into gutters,
trampled under shoes.

The trains still run,
the markets open,
emails pile up,
and the world resumes
its business-as-usual.

The bloom was only a pause,
a reminder that even endings

carry their own fragile grace?
and then the clock ticks on.

the wonder of self-emptying

"the wonder of self-emptying"

To empty is not to vanish.
It is to pour the vessel
until the air itself
becomes a listener.

What remains is not absence
but a widening ?
a room where another voice
may enter and be heard.

feedback reverb

between the measure and its lingering chord
a pause leans into itself?
not absence, but a held breath
threading the room with quiet weight.

chairs remember their occupants,
dust rehearses its slow descent,
and the air waits,
as if something might begin again.

... and the night forgets its name
the silence gathers in the rafters,
an aftersound still trembling in the beams .

thoughts on world homeless day (October 10)

"I Was Homeless Once"

I was homeless once?
not metaphor, but pavement,
the night's breath stiff with diesel,
a borrowed coat that never quite closed.
The city's lights were not for me,
they glittered for windows I could not enter,
for tables where bread was broken
without my name.

I learned the grammar of benches,
the syntax of doorways,
the long pause of hunger
that makes even silence ache.
And still, the body endures?
it finds a corner,
it waits for dawn,
it bargains with cold.

But there is another exile?
homeless in a palace without you.
Marble floors echo louder than alleys,
chandeliers mock with their excess of light.
Every room is furnished,
yet emptier than a street at 3 a.m.
The bed is wide,
but no voice answers the turning.

This homelessness of heart
is less spoken of,
yet more corrosive:
to be roofed, clothed, fed?

and still unsheltered.

I was homeless once,
and I survived.

But I would not wish
the palace-emptiness on anyone.

Better the cold stone
than the warm room
where no one waits.

skylight morning

Outside the skylight, morning breathes?
not a riddle, not a veil,
but a hand stretched open,
steady as the oak that keeps its watch.

The sky is not abyss but garment,
woven blue, a shawl of ease;
its quiet folds smooth out the creases
that the day had pressed upon my brow.

The trees do not whisper secrets,
they speak plainly:
we are here, we endure,
and in our rootedness, you may rest.

No sphinx, no silence heavy with dread?
only the brush of night's last sigh,
and the promise that even in darkness
companionship is near,
and light will always return.

.

gather your fragments

*"Gather up the fragments,
that nothing be lost?"*
so even crumbs
become a silo of abundance.

The night keeps count
of every restless turning,
each tear stoppered
in an unseen flask,
as if sorrow itself
were vintage,
kept for the day of pouring.

What we labour for,
though hidden,
is never in vain?
the soil remembers
every hand that tills it,
every seed pressed down
into the dark.

And in the end,
all things are braided?
loss and gain,
silence and song?
woven toward a good
we glimpse only in part,
yet trust as whole.

_ underscore _

"_underscore_"

the line does not end
it waits ? a low bar,
a held breath _ not yet

beneath the sentence
the underscore drags its quiet spine,
pulling the eye forward,
asking the voice to stumble.

not in capitals,
but in undersong ?
the half?said,
the word leaning into tomorrow.

today's poems fracture,
splinter on enjambment;
but the underscore is subtler,
a stitch that binds absence
to the next insistence.

reader, step across it:
feel the drag of thought
beneath your own tongue ?
know the poem is not finished _
only underscored.

but words keep rising...

I promised myself
to stay quiet,
but the words keep rising?
 worthless
 weak

like graffiti I never wrote
but still find on my walls.
So, I cross them out,

again and again,
as if the line itself
could silence the echo
 worthless
 weak

beneath black tides

Basalt remembers the weight of moons.
Kelp crowns drift from one throne to another.
The gates of R'lyeh lean inward, listening.

Thal'gorath ? a lantern in the marrow ?
breathes green into the pressure,
folds the trench into a single syllable.

Chor'vess intones in the cartilage of the sea,
its pitch a corridor without walls,
its whistle a tide that forgets the shore.

Nyxthid writes in phosphor,
letters unmoored from their alphabet,
rising like bubbles that refuse to burst.

Somewhere above, the surface
is only a rumour of light.

drinking hemlock

at first the words
were stone in my mouth
silent, heavy, unyielding

you pressed a coin
into my palm?
thirty for betrayal,
or thirty for truth?

now the choice burns:
to open my eyes
and let the imperfect syllables fall,
or to seal them shut
and sip the bitter draught
that keeps the poem flawless
but forever unborn

better, perhaps,
to stumble in speech
than to die with silence
curled like a serpent
around the tongue .

consolation in the kitchen

Consolation in the Kitchen

The knife rests,
its silver edge carrying
a small sun across the crust.

You wanted the impossible?
to butter your toast and eat it too,
to keep the sheen intact
while tasting its warmth.

Isn't that the old wish,
to hold the thing and spend it,
to keep the flame unbroken
while leaning into its light?

So we practice the art of vanishing:
a bite, a swallow,
the plate left clean
yet somehow still radiant.

And tomorrow,
when the loaf is smaller,
we'll laugh at the trick again?
to butter your toast and eat it too,
and call it survival.

respectable

"Respectable"

since you wanted me,
I ask myself?
to what point
did I become more respectable?

was it the mirror of your eyes,
the sudden weight of your touch,
the way my name sounded
different in your mouth?

or was it only illusion,
a costume stitched
from your desire,
a mask I wore
because you believed in it?

respectability?
a fragile crown,
bestowed, withdrawn,
never entirely mine.

and yet,
in that moment,
I stood taller,
as if your wanting
had remade me.

dance in the wake

I have carried your absence
longer than your presence?
your laughter once rippled across me,
your shadow bent in my tide.

Now I mourn in silence,
my waters thick with silted memory,
each wave a knell,
each eddy a sigh.

But grief is never still.
It shifts, it churns,
and in the turning
I find a darker music.

I imagine the dance
upon your grave,
feet stamping where roots entwine,
a rhythm not of cruelty
but of release?
the body's last rebellion
against the weight of stone.

I am the Thames:
I cradle both dirge and revel,
I keep your secrets in my depths,
yet on my surface
I shimmer with the laughter
of those who dare to live
after loss.

So let me be both mourner

and musician,
the tide that keens,
the tide that waltzes?
for love, once drowned,
still rises in the current,
still dances in the wake.

weapons of mass distraction

Screens glow like altars.
We kneel, thumbs twitching
prayers to gods of noise.

The loudest silence is
the one we scroll past.

Billboards bloom
like invasive flowers,
their petals of neon
masking the stars.

We are armed not with rifles,
but with endless feeds,
notifications detonating
in the pocket. The war is
not for land, but for attention.

Somewhere, a child waits for
a story that is not interrupted
by a ringtone.

The weapon is simple:
keep you from yourself.

in the waning light

in the waning light

The streetlight flickers,
its circle thinning and swelling
like a tired breath.

A man drags a cart of bottles?
they strike and scatter
against each other,
a bright clatter
that almost arranges itself,

as if you could lean in
and hear the fragments
choose their own song. .

Devon Pan

Devon Pan

A boy with goats,
flute pressed to his lips,
breath spilling into wood?
a ribbon of sound
trembling like reeds in a river.

The goats shuffle,
a comic chorus,
yet their eyes, like his,
turn toward the woman on wheels,
her hair a banner in the salt wind.
Not Syrinx fleeing Arcadia,
but a Devon cyclist?
swift, untouchable?
her passage stirring
the same old hunger.

Pan once chased,
and Syrinx became music.
Here, the chase is only eyes:
a turning of heads,
a melody half-formed
in the boy's chest.

Wordsworth might have called him
"a simple child of nature,"
innocence grazing in the fields?
yet already the heart quickens,
already the world
is more than pasture.

Keats would have lingered
on the "*unheard melodies*" of the flute,
the sweetness of desire
that never quite arrives,
while Shelley might have named
the wind itself a piper,
scattering notes
across the restless sea.

And so the scene holds:
a boy, a flute,
goats nodding in rhythm,
a woman vanishing down the trail?
all of it ordinary,
all of it myth.
For in every gaze
that follows beauty,
in every breath
that makes music,
the old story repeats:
Pan reaching,
Syrinx escaping,
life itself singing
in the space between.

workday residue

The scaffolding outside
rattles in the wind,
its joints recollecting
the weight of workers.

On my desk?
a stack of receipts,
ink already fading,
edges curled like tired hands.

The room is empty,
but the residue of voices
still leans against the walls.

the corkscrew

"The Corkscrew"

In the cellar,
green?glass vessels lean
 against one another,
their shoulders dust?padded,
 throats sealed tight.

Some wait decades,
stoppered against the tremor of hands
that might one day twist them open.
Others burst early,
foam rushing into the air
as if silence itself were unbearable.

Life, too, is a rack of bottles?
some forgotten in the corner,
 labels blurred,
contents thickening into memory.
Others are restless,
pressing against their corks,
 uncontainable,
a fizz that refuses to be archived.

And we?
we are the corkscrews,
spiralling into the grain of our days,
levering against the stubborn seal,
wondering whether release
 is celebration,
or simply another form of spilling.

herd of words

"The Herd of Words"

We move together,
dust rising
from our hooves of ink,
across the wide plain of silence.

The grass bends,
and we bend with it,
feeding on syllables,
grazing on breath.

Each of us carries a fragment,
a line, a rhythm,
but the herd is the poem entire.

We are restless,
never still for long,
seeking fresher pastures of meaning,
waterholes of wonder.

The land needs us,
and we need the land.
Without the field, we starve.
Without the herd, the field lies fallow.

So we thunder on,
poets and poetry,
a single body,
a living chant,
a migration of voices

across an endless plain.

first light

First Light

The roofs are still
but the sky begins to loosen?
a pale seam of rose
threading the horizon.

He sits in the quiet
before the town stirs,
jacket slack on his shoulders,
eyes catching the faintest
silver of daybreak.

Before bells peal,
no bird in flight?
only the promise
that the dark has thinned,
and the world
is willing to begin again.

when we thought ourselves lost

So stain?
as marks that remain longer than intent,
and hesitation pressed into the grain.

Second guess,
doubt's small fracture widening,
as though the Voice were drowned,
as though we mistook the silence
for absence.

But sustain is not the clean note held?
it is the rough edge,
the falter carried forward,
the scar that steadies the hand.

And then?
awareness returns:
the Voice was never gone,
but braided in the ordinary speech
of those set beside us,
their words a lantern,
their presence the unlooked-for guide.

So stain becomes sustain:
not erasure,
but the keeping of every mark,
attesting of our having been led
even when we thought ourselves lost.

"the inviolable"

"the inviolable"

the inviolable
a locked door...
bolted tight
against roaring tides
a sudden tilt?
shadows crest,
windslash the ridge
yet this steadied breath
keeps our center
in the inviolable

V.I.P.

they enter not with boots but brogues?
shined mirror-bright, reflection-proof?
carrying portfolios stuffed with secrets
and a grin that clocks in before the truth does

they sip from crystal talk transparency
through patent teeth
(fogged slightly with lobbying)

floor speeches flow like varnish:
smooth, non-stick, unsinkable

they nod through the anthem
hand on heart pocket on donor
"here to serve," they say while quietly
serving seconds to the highest bidder

the cloakroom echoes with forgotten intentions
and skeleton keys to closed-door committees

each law passed a paper boat folded with invisible ink
and still, the headlines call them honourable
while we scroll through what's left of the paddock

closing the distance

Not the label sewn on the inside,
but the hands that passed it down?
Not the boots that walked first,
but how far they let you roam.
We measured riches
in treehouse kingdoms,
in second helpings,
in stories from a worn-out hat.
How far from poverty?
Far enough to remember.
Close enough to understand.

should paths recross

should paths recross

nature wisely prevents crosswires
and so some groups part ways
timing and reason all considered
that is all at once sad and pragmatic

the sentimentalist within rails on so
but the inner realist grasps the deal
perhaps some day paths will recross

trickster in fur

(as Cat)

He pads into the room
with the litigation of whiskers,
tail a gavel, paws soft as velvet arguments.

Montgomery Slyde, Esq.?
tabby of dubious repute, s
elf-appointed magistrate
of windowsills and warm laptops.

His medals are claw-marks
on the armchair,
his IOUs a trail of fur
left on black coats.

He struts the tavern alley,
trading bottle caps for sardines,
boasting of battles
against pigeons and shadows.

And when the night closes in,
he tips his hat?
which is only an ear twitch?
before curling into himself,
a trickster curled in stripes,
dreaming of the next
trial by moonlight.

the masked 'reader'

The Masked Reader

It comes with warmth, a friendly tone,
a note that seems to stand alone.
But read between the lines, beware?
not every praise is truly care.

"*Beautifully done!*" the words repeat,
yet nothing named, no detail sweet.
A hollow cheer, a practiced song,
a script that feels rehearsed, not strong.

The tale soon bends, the mask slips fast,
from reader's joy to sales at last.
A childhood dream, a crafted pitch,
a subtle scheme, this bait?and?switch.

Three doors are opened, all at once?
email, Discord, Insta fronts.
A net is cast both wide and deep,
to pull you where the shadows creep.

"*Reach out to me, before you buy,
I'll answer questions, don't be shy.*"
But fans don't sell, they simply cheer,
they don't demand you draw them near.

So, mark the signs, the subtle wrong:
the tone too smooth, the praise too long.
A mask of love, a hidden plan,
not reader's heart, but merchant's hand.

the promise of morning

The Promise of Morning

Let us rise with the dawn,
shoulders brushed by first light,
the hush of night still clinging
to the edges of our breath.

Embrace this new day's promise,
not as a grand decree,
but as the simple turning
of leaves toward the sun.

Tomorrow's whispers guide us?
a chorus of unseen wings,
reminding us that even the smallest step
is covenanted with what still lies ahead.

The innocence of past years fuels our steps,
not as nostalgia's weight,
but as kindling carried forward,
sparks that refuse to dim.

And so, together, we find peace
in Present's embrace: a stillness
that does not bind, but steadies,
a moment wide enough to hold
both ache and joy, and call them
by the same name? beginning. .

in the end

In the End

I carried the shape you traced,
a vessel cut to your measure,
but the grain ran otherwise?
knots where you wanted polish,
splinters where you asked for sheen.

I bent, yes,
but the bend was fracture,
and the fracture sang its own line.

You looked for a mirror,
I offered a window.
You asked for a key,
I was only a door left ajar.

So this saga closes:
not as betrayal,
not as triumph,
but as the quiet fact?
I was never the figure
you drafted in your hand.

And still,
I remain:
unfinished,
unwanted,
yet wholly mine.

pears in a moonlit orchard

Pears in a Moonlight Orchard

At the edge of a grove, pears trees sit in queue,
Their branches tangled, offer'ng spectral view,
The lantern of night spills a silv'ry dew, ????
A breath of orchard drifts as maiden's hair.

A fox in the hedgerow lingers, its shadow grown,
The frost on the furrows is quietly shown,
The farmhouse is silent, the fields over?sown, ????
And pears in their dreaming are caught in the air.

They are resting in baskets, under the beams of glass,
On the worn wooden tables where the shadows pass,
They gather the shimmer as the night hours mass, ????
And silent the stair by the orchard hill.

In the loft beyond there is nothing but flame,
The hearth's faint glow and the rafters the same,
They cradle the pears in a silver frame, ???
?Moon?washed and waiting, utterly still.

a moment turning

"A Slow Turning"

The stairs lengthen each season,
though the house remains the same.
Names slip from my tongue?
like coins through a frayed pocket,
clinking faintly in corridors I no longer patrol.

I misplace mornings,
folding them into afternoons
that arrive already weary.

The calendar stares back blank,
its squares scraped clean,
eraser dust gathering at the margins.

Once, I carried lanterns of memory?
now their glass fogs, their wicks splutter,
spitting wax and smoke
into rooms that echo with absence.

The rooms grow hollow,
like ribs without breath,
their emptiness pressing inward
until silence settles in the chest.

Still, I walk.
Each step rehearses collapse,
each pause claws back a name.
The body grows heavier,
but the quiet between heartbeats
remains mine to measure.

after-image

Rain streaks the window of the late-night tram,
and I catch my reflection?
half-lit, half-blurred,
a passenger caught in between:

Cinema lights sputter,
half the bulbs gone,
yet the pavement glows enough
to draw shadows forward,
figures drifting past
like fragments of a reel
spliced mid-story.

The fairground stalls linger,
shutters rattling in the wind,
a lone vendor packs away
the last cones of cotton candy?
sweet air dissolving into night,
traces of laughter
cling to statted rides.

Conflict leans into silence:
not fists, nor shouts,
but the pause of a step
held too long at the corner,
a whole city waiting
for a stalled walker to move again.

farcical bloomery

In the meadow of impossible mornings,
the daisies exhale in a trumpet's blush,
petals fluttering like embarrassed fans as
the air fills with laughter disguised as wind.

Rosehip hiccups, clouds of lavender smoke,
their thorns rattling like spoons in a drawer.
Lilies bow low, releasing secret choruses,
a brass band hidden in their stems.

Children chase the gusts,
catching invisible balloons of fragrance,
while the sky itself wrinkles with mirth,
blue fabric stitched by invisible seams.

And I, wandering through this orchestra,
learn that Beauty isn't always solemn?
it giggles, it sputters, farting flowers fair,
a garden of jokes blooming in full colour.

eleventh hour remembrance

Armistice Day: The Eleventh Hour

The vineyard calls at fading light,
The last are welcomed into sight.
No wage is lost, no soul denied,
The master's mercy turns the tide.

At trenches' edge, clocks did align,
The eleventh hour drew its sign.
Guns fell silent, breath was stayed,
A fragile peace at last was made.

So numbers bind both war and word,
The Gospel's grace, the bugle heard.
From vineyard rows to fields of clay,
We mark the hour, and bow to pray.

Chad on his soapbox

"Chad on His Soapbox"

Here comes Chad on his soapbox,
scrolling feeds and posting loud.
He claims he sees the world so clearly,
but his storm is just a digital cloud.

Chad picks fights in every comment,
tweets his rage in endless threads.
Whether in church memes or politics,
love is the casualty his anger spreads.

Oh, Chad, do you hear the silence growing,
do you see your words come echoing back?
One day your followers will stop showing,
and who will care when your feed goes black?

Oh, Chad, don't you ever pause to listen?
don't you see the hurt you're handing out?
There are hands extended, tears that glisten ?
step down from your soapbox, you're missing out.

star black out

A star folds inward,
its pull rearranging galaxies.
Cells echo this collapse,
their endings feeding the marrow of others.
Bowie's last breath curved space?
not silence, but resonance.
Planets circle memory,
drawn by a gravity that still remains.

unhinged

Born in six?seven,
the poet carries a number
like a badge, a cipher,
a code trolling beneath skin.
The scroll unrolls?
papyrus, parchment, pixel,
each surface a corridor
where words march, then fade.
At the hinge he pauses:
between ink and screen,
between chant and silence,
between belonging and drift.
The scroll resists completion?
always more to read,
always more to forget,
its edge curling back on itself.
So he walks the seam,
poet of six?seven,
bearing the hinge as compass,
and in the reel of 6?7, viral chant,
he is clear for the next message.

signals

Signals

You said *call me* ?

a door left ajar,
a hand extended into the silence,
trusting the echo to return.

I said *I'll call you* ?

a promise folded in my pocket,
a coin that may never be spent,
control disguised as care.

Between us hangs the dial tone,
a wire strung tight with longing,
where one waits in quiet hope,
and the other drifts in delay.

And yet ?

in the pause between words,
in the static between breaths,
we both know the truth:
connection is a fragile thing,
and sometimes love is only
a number never dialled.

random inaccess

random inaccess

Letters describe a moment
where time stretches?
stairs growing longer
with each season,
yet the house doesn't change.

Names slip?
spoken and lost,
like coins lost in a torn pocket?
clinking faintly in empty halls.

Mornings are misplaced,
slipped into tired afternoons.

The calendar lies blank,
scraped raw,
its edges powdered with erased plans.

Looking? glass memory fogs up,
reflections blur and scatter
across the silent rooms.

Rooms hollow
as unbreathed ribs,
their emptiness pressing in.

The speaker moves,
each step testing balance,
each pause a fight to recall a name.

The body grows heavy.

But the space between heartbeats?
this quiet nestles within its cage.

in the kitchen drawer

It waits in the drawer,
a spiral of patience,
metal glint tucked among
the scatter of spoons.
Lifted, it feels heavier
than its size should allow,
a small machine of insistence,
hinged for descent.
The point finds its mark,
presses into the cork's skin,
and the spiral begins its slow
burrowing, grain against grain.
The spiral burrows deeper,
metal teeth worrying the grain,
until the neck loosens,
a faint tremor at the rim.
Glass waits, taut with silence,
then yields?an opening
that breathes without announcement,
its throat bare to the air.
On the table, the bottle leans,
shadow stretched like a question,
while the cork, stunned in its release,
rests in the palm, still warm.

hello poetry

hello poetry

Beneath the rustling of an unwritten page,
a quiver begins?soft as rain on glass.
Words lean toward each other,
testing the air between syllables,
like strangers exchanging glances
before they dare to speak.

Here, the ink is not just ink?
it is breath, the slow unfurling of a thought
that has waited years for its own voice.
Every line a bridge, every pause a doorway.

And when the poem finds you,
it does not knock?
it slips into your chest,
settles beside your heartbeat,
and ripples outward from it.

the road ahead

The Road Ahead

There are turns you just don't get to take?
not because anyone's cruel,
but because once wires knot up,
the whole thing sparks out.
So, folks split off,
and the timing and reasons
close themselves with a sigh.

The soft-hearted part of me
wants to argue with that,
wants to circle back,
jiggle the lock on the old gate,
see if the latch still gives.

But the realist?
that gravel-voiced buddy?
leans in and says:
*going back only messes with the lesson,
looking back just slows the walk.*

Still, absence doesn't disappear.
It sprouts side-paths:
a hollow in the chest that catches rain,
a chair at the table that makes you sit straighter,
a silence that learns your name
and answers when you call.

So, absence hangs around,
not because you asked it to,
but because it won't leave?

a shadow that keeps pace,
a hand you can't grab
but still feel brushing your sleeve.

Paths might cross again, or not.
The smarter move is forward,
feet steady on the gravel,
eyes open for the next bend.
And even as I keep walking,
I carry the ache like a small flame?
not to light the way back,
but to see a little clearer the road ahead. .

my only hymn

Too long have my eyes been
salt?wells,
each dawn a wound, each moon
a mask of grief,
each sun a bitter chalice
poured upon my tongue.
Love, sharp as a spear,
has swollen me
where languor daggers
the marrow.

O let the keel of my soul crack,
let me founder
in the abyssal mush,
to be swallowed whole
by the fathoms
where silence is
my only hymn.

more than scribbles

"More Than Scribbles"

The pen does not speak?
it holds its silence in a chamber,
a reservoir where sentences
float unformed,
dark rivers stalled
before the mouth of paper.

Each droplet is a thought
waiting for gravity's compunction,
a poem in liquid pause,
its capillary compression
held at the narrow throat of the nib.

The pipeline presses with pressure,
yet nothing escapes?
until the hand inclines,
and gravity leans through the hinge,
drawing futures downward
onto a waiting page.

There, a stained tributary
eddies downstream,
curling into margins,
its current carrying fragments
toward the widening mouth of breath.

A single line spills,
a thought becomes visible,
the poem begins to breathe.

senior formal (prom)

"Senior Formal (prom)"

The shoes still shine with laughter,
sequins scatter like echoes across the floor.
Every dance step pressed into the night
as if the world itself tilted closer,
to listen to joy stitched into fabric.

Yet under the belt of years,
no vacant holders wait
for childhood's tokens?
the belt is already crowded,
a museum of contrasts:
games never played,
but triumphs carried in silence,
a wishlist of absences
turned into weight.

So, the child returns,
carrying a night swollen with music,
a ballroom of memory, where sweetness
lingers in the air, bubbly tickles into breath.
The tension is not between loss and gain,
but between what still remains
and what insists on becoming.

tu me manques (what Fox says)

"What Fox Says"

Fox says: *apprivoiser* won't be possessed
but a slow-weave of absence into thread
you tilt among the stars
and i trace the outline of your missing shape
knowing the outline itself still abides

there the sketch suspends
hollowed lines tremble while
i cradle the paper as though
the blank within it were the closest
i could come to you

tu me manques
not grammar but ache
a twinge where language falters
the rose bends her head not in shame
but in the act of being present unseen

the desert reaches silence
but silence is not enough
i hear your laughter in the echo of wells
and the sand mirrors presence
half?remembered half>true
like a constellation refusing to fade

the prince says: *les étoiles sont belles*
parce qu'elles contiennent
une fleur qu'on ne voit pas
so, i walk beneath them
knowing each glimmer

is a reminder you are gone
yet impossibly near - a rose
hidden in the sky's vast pocket

tu me manques refuses closure
a grammar of ache and wonder
it is the fox's farewell
the rose's quiet endurance
the child's sketch of a sheep
that will never quite arrive -
the outline traced at the start
abides luminous, unbroken

self-deprecation

Swine Script

You call it a bond,
I call it a tether?
a hog?tie dressed up as poetry.
The lash sings, the rope bites,
and suddenly loyalty
looks a lot like livestock.

In the pigpen of verse
you root with your snout:
penning like a pig,
penned like a pig,
inking the sty
with squeals and scratchings.

Swine, hog, porker, boar?
your lexicon a butcher's bill,
each word a cleaver,
each stanza a sausage casing.

And still, you parade it as art,
this muck?splattered manuscript,
garlanding the sow with pearls
only to watch her roll them in dung.

The bond, you say, is sacred.
I say it's bacon waiting for the pan.

river's ardent flame

the river's ardent flame

the river bends into dark corners
Argand lamps gleam across its skin
each flame a question
each ripple an answer folded away

the bridge waits in shadow
stone pressed against stone
listening to every footfall
holding the weight of crossings

the Argand light steadies
not words but fragments
a laughter broken into dust
a troth scattered into air

lamps shimmer into the current
the river folds time
into shapes no one hails
its surface glimmers with mem'ries

the bridge endures
each step a renewal
stone breathing with passage
arches bending toward recall

brilliant flecks steady again
touching stone and glass
absence sky-drift faint as ash
presence flares in ardent return

forever keep silent

"Zwijgen Voor Altijd"

Within these walls,
memory claws again?
talons once raked
through tender skin.
The bars still hold
their verdict tight.

The sound of boots
in narrow halls
marks a rhythm
too sharp to forget.
Each strike recalls
the sentence spoken.

Two figures bend low,
eyes narrowed,
searching shadows
for a place to breathe.
Their names unspoken,
their silence shared.

Night grants a pause,
a fragile cover.
Yet even sleep
cannot hold its tongue:
dreams spill
what waking lips conceal.
The silence cracks,
then seals again.

Beneath stone,
a chamber waits.
No cipher speaks?
only the sentence
of lifelong silence.

ink on the Savannah

The poem bares its teeth: a hyena,
laughter breaking in jagged bursts,
circling the margins,
menace felt in scuffling shadows.

Then it rises upright: a meerkat,
eyes darting across horizons,
paws quick in sudden scurry,
a hesitant vigil before burrowing.

Between circling and scurry,
menace and play entwine,
scarfing fragments into chorus
more than jotted lines on a page.

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hearth of language

hearth of language

Set the table, and let the light fall,
cut the bread, cost nothing but time.
Read my face for the story?
for and, or but, yet so?
we keep finding ways to meet.

A few laughs shared,
a lot of pauses filled,
twenty of those small gestures
put us back in step.

So often, many times,
and always once more,
my hand set beside yours,
the rhythm unchanging,
the word read aloud together.

Not grand, not distant?
just the steady cost of care,
the hearth of language,
the warmth of being here.

panels and tears

panels and tears

We polish cedar, grain by grain,
while the temple outside collapses in rain.
The Valley of Baca drips with tears,
pilgrims stumble, but we sip our years.

Panelled walls, imported pride,
faith reduced to carpentry inside.
The prophet's voice? ignored, dismissed?
we measure devotion by how well we've dressed.

And still, in painted rooms we sigh,
for tall young captains marching by.
Chaldean shoulders, gleaming spears,
more alluring than the pilgrims' tears.

So let the valley flood with cries,
we'll drown them out with cedar lies.
Better a panel than a spring,
better a captain than the King.

Wynken, Blynken, and Nod (reprise)

Wynken, Blynken, and Nod (reprise)

They set forth again, the fishermen three,
their chair of seasoned steel, rolling free,
their wheels carrying stories gathered
from seas where frolic once travelled.

Gold in their hair, not from youth's frame
but from the long sun's patient flame,
they cast their nets not for silver schools
but for recollection's wispy spools.

Wynken carries songs of ports remembered,
Blynken charts the stars with care,
Nod reclines, eyes half-closed,
seeing the horizon as a gentle gate.

No lullaby now, but a tide of years,
each turn a companion, each gust a guide.
They travel into dusk, not to vanish,
but to dwell where sky meets sea.

And if children once dreamed them,
let elders now glimpse their passage:
three fishermen, golden, weathered,
harbourmasters waving to unfurling sails.

outstaring a blank wall

outstaring a blank wall

You stand before a wall.
It waits, blank as withheld breath.

What hovers over you?
Drafts unpinned,
stories unspoken,
videos sealed,
pages chasing horizons
that never arrive.

Perfection dithers?
a mask for delay.
What if you placed
one imperfect mark?
What if you let motion
carve its shape?

The wall gathers:
crooked sketches,
half-born concepts,
awkward stretches,
jokes collapsing mid-laugh.

Chaotic. Messy.
Unfit for display.

Yet weeks later?
fragments draw together,
a shape begins to inhale.

Not triumph,
but a quiet forming,
a world exhaling
what 'til now was withheld.

benign maleficense

Benign malfeasance?

a clerk's smile at the counter,
forms stamped in triplicate,
the theft already filed away.

Benignly malfeasant?

the handshake that
seals a bargain of loss,
harm notarized in blue ink.

The benignity of malfeasance?

a phrase spoken in committee,
grave courtesy masking
floorboards quietly sold.

Malfeasance, benign on paper?

accounts balanced
by subtracting the poor,
kindness measured in fines.

Malfeasance benignified?

a pageant of loopholes,
the judge applauds,
the thief wears a sash.

Benign malfeasance,

malfeasant benignity,
mal?benign?feasance?

syllables stumble,
the mask splits,
the phrase devours itself.

And then the phrase signs your name.

call it survival

Consolation in the Kitchen

The knife rests,
its silver edge carrying
a small sun across the crust.

You wanted the impossible?
to butter your toast and eat it too,
to keep the sheen intact
while tasting its warmth.

Isn't that the old wish,
to hold the thing and spend it,
to keep the flame unbroken
while leaning into its light?

So we practice the art of vanishing:
a bite, a swallow,
the plate left clean
yet somehow still radiant.

And tomorrow,
when the loaf is smaller,
we'll laugh at the trick again?
to butter your toast and eat it too,
and call it survival.

running into the mirror

running into the mirror

You keep chasing after him?

feet blistered on asphalt,

lungs bargaining with the night.

Every poster on your wall

whispers rebellion,

but the ink stains your palms

like unpaid rent.

The chorus of your friends

still believes in neon destiny,

yet the streetlight flickers,

reminding you:

dreams are not debit?free.

You keep chasing after him?

but who is chasing you?

The clock, with its unkind grin.

The mirror, with its unedited glare.

The voice that says:

grow up, or be grown by circumstance.

And still you run,

half?convinced the sprint itself

is proof of being present,

half?terrified that the finish line

is nothing more than

a folded bill in someone else's pocket.

cerulean chasm

I laugh at the belts:
two lines of blue,
no difference to me.

You say it matters?
you say it has always mattered,
from gowns to racks,
from morning to the corner shop.

We are already wearing it,
though I thought I stood apart.

They chose it before us,
and now the choice
is pressed into my hands.

I will not laugh tomorrow
but lift the belt up to light
perhaps, then, I will see
 how minutiae
carry the weight of a world.

no flowers

"A Widow's Lament in an Age of no Flowers"

Late on the night of January's frost,
I watched my husband pay the final cost.
They brought him wreathes, they brought him song,
they crowned his rest, they called it strong.

But I cannot forget the other ground,
where no flowers bloom, no bells resound.
The Romanov children, stripped and slain,
their bodies hidden in Siberian rain.

Graveless, cancelled, rubbed from unscrolled page,
yet their voices cry against the rage.
No cenotaph, nor a marble stone;
unperturbed, unmarked and overgrown.

And I, the widow, dare not tell
my comrades of this thought of Hell:
What if the Faith they sought to kill
still tolls its bell, relentless, shrill?

For one is celebrated, banners unfurled,
while others are banished from this world.
Yet stars above, with hostile light,
judge both alike in endless night.

still waters stirred

"Still Waters Stirred"

The silence struck like lightning through the vein,
A bolt beneath the temple's ordered tide?
Yet from the slackened mouth and tethered brain
A pulse of will refused to sink or hide.

O stroke! You thief that halts the tongue mid-song,
You shook but did not shatter. In your rage
I found the fire to grip my breath, grow strong,
And write again upon a stammered page.

For though the body stumbles in the wake,
The spirit learns to dance a slower tune;
In dawnlight now, each step I dare to take
Becomes a psalm against a dark monsoon.

as absence returns

"As Absence Turns"

The sky bends under unnamed weight,
a path without its anchor,
voices gather but refuse
to name what hardens or shines.

Light fractures across the stone,
a sudden presence where absence ruled.
The ground steadies, yet no mooring holds,
and brightness refuses to gleam by name.

Anchor drifts between broken syllables,
shine threads through the dim air.
The song rises without burden,
and the horizon dissolves into motion.

a leafy bloom?s pledge

"a leafy bloom's pledge"

Firm will enters through hidden morphemes,
a vow carried without leaf or bloom.
Resolve bends but does not shatter,
its path refusing the easy blossom.

Leaf trembles against the restless air,
flower opens to a waning flame.
Soil shifts beneath uncertain steps,
and measure falters in unspoken time.

Vows rise in breath's hollow
cadence moves with the turning sky.
Their song gathers in unmeasured flight,
and hours scatter into widening space.

of shards and fragments

"of shards and fragments"

One story walks the desert,
learning to endure.

The other climbs the rock,
vanishing without answer.

Both leave fragments?

survival and absence?

to be carried, not resolved.

A cry begins,

cut short,

collapse denied,

endurance affirmed.

What cannot be answered

is carried instead,

a shard held together,

not abandoned to despair.

Imported order dissolves,

whether in white dresses or suburban fathers.

The land insists,

and the psyche learns to endure?

not with despair,

but with fragments carried forward,

a stoicism born of dust and rock.

fractious fractals

"fractious fractals"

Streetlamp fracture ?
a hand lifts into stone.

Shadow pressed flat,
pavement swallows the gesture.

Petal of asphalt,
rain glosses its edge.

Wall breaks light,
a bird pivots mid?air.

Faces blur,
glass aperture holds them.

Train breath,
shadow slides across tile.

Tongue of rain,
syllables scatter on tin.

Chalk petals,
erased by a passing shoe.

Stone cools,
light fractures its edge.

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on the border of another day

The day presses in,
and the air runs thin enough
to split the skin
at my mouth's border.

Heat gathers,
insisting on its own direction,
and I move with it,
not for triumph,

but because standing still
has its own cost.

lantana in the clearing

Lantana in the Clearing

Clusters blaze at the forest's edge,
imported fire dressed as carnival bloom.
A gift once carried across oceans,
now thickened into barricades of thorn.

Birds scatter seed into gullies,
creeks choke under the weight of color.
What was planted for delight
has learned to occupy every margin.

The flower's stink betrays its brocade,
a gaudy veil over strangled ground.
Farmers curse, children marvel,
and the scrub hardens into its grip.

No sermon follows? only the thicket,
pressing forward with unyielding hold.
It does not depart, it does not relent:
a presence that seizes the clearing entire.

winter palette

"winter palette"

Winter leans in
with a painter's restraint,
lifting soft blues
from the frost's first breath,
letting tree?shadows sketch
silver across the ground.
Branches rise like quiet script,
each stroke a reminder
that pared?back beauty
asks only to be seen.

there is a room

"there is a room"

There is a room
where names wait at the door,
stacked like coats
on a winter hook.
Inside, a chair holds its place.
Pages rest half-turned.
Ink settles into shape
on the desk's quiet plane.
These are the room's fixtures ?
the things that stay still
so other things can move.
Then the shift begins:
a line adjusting itself,
a thought testing its weight,
a gesture forming before it knows its purpose.
The room listens,
not for meaning
but for motion.
And when you step out again,
you sense the room
has altered itself
just enough
to let the next visitor enter differently.

essence in Surikov

"essence in Surikov"

He wrote it as the warmth left his hand,
a red?warm script rising from within,
as though the line itself carried breath:

"In this life it is not new to die,"

spoken with the calm of someone
who has watched winter iterating
its familiar pattern for centuries,
each return neither omen nor surprise,
just the world continuing its old motion.

"But neither is it new to be alive,"

and here the words shift their weight?
not brighter, not louder,
but opening a quiet passage
where another way of making
steps forward without ceremony.

From there, the thought rallies toward
a way of making that masters the familiar
through observant contemplation,
shaping what is here by returning to it,
touch after touch,
until the red?warm script
settles into ink
that congeals with a rising, breathing wind.

call it truth

Neither a stain,
nor the mark of a hand
that didn't pretend
to be more precise than it was.
but corners left unstraightened,

folds that refuse to lie flat?
the small rebellion that
keeps the room alive.

Call it slovenly if you like;
I call it the place where the work
finally tells your truth.

before the day stirs

Before the day stirs,
a wash of lavender
drifts along the horizon,
a brief watercolour
held between breaths.

Step into it.
Let the cool air steady you,
let the sky's slow unfurling
set the pace for what follows. .

travel companions

Choose a scarf for the day?
the one gifted by a friend,
the one found in a forgotten shop,
the one stitched by patient hands.
Each carries a story.

Write the giver's name on the tag
so the memory travels with you,
a quiet companion
woven into the morning.

a poem that builds itself

"Ode to the Poem That Built Itself"

It begins with a small stir?
a notion barely awake,
lifting its head as if the air
had asked it to begin.

One notion nudges another,
and soon they travel in pairs,
trading weight, trading colour,
finding new shapes in the drift.

Lines gather like quiet workers
around a long bench,
each adding a sliver of craft
to whatever the last one left behind.

And from that steady labour
a shape begins to rise?
not sudden, not declared,
just the slow gathering of parts
that recognise each other.

It rises as if urged from within?
each part finding its place
with a quiet certainty,
gaining shape the way a spark
catches and grows
until the whole form stands,
advancing with each opposing step.

hills to climb

"hills to climb"

A figure counted once,
standing where the verge breaks open.
Word intact, meaning thinned,
a marker left upright by habit alone.

Grass leans in, listening.
Its tilt becomes direction,
though the ground beneath it
slides in its own quiet argument.

Your craft appears sideways?
a pattern caught in the corner of vision,
not quite bird, not quite glimmer,
something that knew how
 to move without witness.

Kindness travels the low path,
choosing its turns the way water does,
touching stone, root, fallen branch,
never asking which part
 should be remembered.

Faces drift to weather,
voices soften to grain,
yet a nearness lingers,
unclaimed but steady in its place.

The ridge circles back.
Old lines rise with it,

not to conclude,
only to continue the climb.

winterspeak

I'll let winter speak
in its own slow cadence.
Walk at its pace.
And listen for what it utters?

with unrehearsed patient attention.

In this pared?back season,
your strongest lines
may yet arrive quietly,
asking only that you notice them.

broad-back city

Broad?Backed City

City with grit under its fingernails,
you stand there like someone who knows
the job will outlast the daylight.
You laugh with your whole chest,
not because the world is kind,
but because the joke lands better
when you're still upright.
I've walked your blocks at first light,
steam lifting from grates like a cook's breath
before the shift begins.
I've heard the freight yards mutter
their iron vowels,
each wagon a stubborn syllable
in a language built by hands
that never asked permission.
You carry your bruises openly.
You don't tidy them.
You don't pretend they arrived by chance.
You wear them the way a tradesman
keeps old scars:
as proof that the work was real
and the pay rarely matched the effort.
And still?
in the middle of all that racket,
someone is sweeping a stoop,
someone is lifting a crate,
someone is calling to a neighbour
as though the day might yet
turn generous.
City of broad shoulders, yes?
but also broad backs,

broad hopes,
broad jokes told too loudly
in corner diners where the coffee
is always a little burnt
and always good enough.
I won't flatter you.
You don't need it.
You've built your own praise
out of brick dust
and stubborn moorings.
You stand there,
unapologetic,
alive in the way a place is alive
when people keep showing up
even when they're tired.
And I stand with you,
not to bless,
not to scold,
but simply to say:
I see the work you carry,
and I'm here for the next shift.

way into warmth

Stand before the mirror
and let a laugh escape?
even a small one.

Winter softens under such mischief,
as if the room brightens
simply because you dared
to play your way into warmth.

wintergreen

Winter is a held breath,
a season gathering its strength.
Beneath the soil,
roots wait for their moment.

When green returns,

it arrives as if from nowhere,
reminding us that every pause
is simply a doorway
to what comes next.

Pancras Pancakes

St Pancras lifts
its red brick above the rails,
morning light slithering
like a spine along the arches
as travellers eddy in loose currents
toward platforms breathing warm air.

A name rolls through the hall?
PANK?r?s?
and in the drift of bodies
another sound shivers beside it,
PANK?ree??s,
one note striking the tiles sharp and bright,
the other dragging low through the crowd,
their clash flickering in the rafters
before thinning into the station's breath.

Kreato? waits near the ticket gates,
unhurried,
its consonants scraping
faint lines through the air,
vowels looping after them in slow curls,
the whole shape clinging to the gate rail
like tangled ivy grown there overnight,
standing beside create
only because the letters
happen to share a coat.

Announcements crack overhead
like distant signals,

footsteps scatter across the concourse,
and the paired syllables drift away?
one toward anatomy,
one toward trains?
until a warm scent rises
through the churn of steam,
tracing a departed train's path,
sweet as a held breath.

A pan on the griddle?
each flap a fleeting platform,
batter rising like a paused announcement.

Pancakes!

the bridge at dusk

"The Bridge at Dusk"

They met where the old stone path
dropped toward the river bend,
light thinning, air sharp enough
to make every breath feel earned.
Neither had planned its timing.
Both arrived as if summoned
by the same stubborn thought.

"So you came."
The voice carried more grit than welcome.

"Aye. Someone had to."
A shrug, half?defensive, half?defiant.

Wind pressed between them
like a third participant
waiting for the first misstep.

They stood there, two figures
carved by long weather,
each convinced the other
had stepped away first.
Old loyalty sat heavy
beneath their ribs,
but pride held the reins.

"You vanished."
"You stopped asking."
"You pushed."

"You pulled."

The quarrel rose quick,
a flare of flint on flint.
Hands gestured sharply,
boots scraped gravel,

and for a moment it seemed
they might walk off
in opposite directions
and let the river claim the rest.

But something shifted.
Not softened ? shifted.
A realisation landing
like a stone in the gut:
they were fighting
but why they still care?

One exhaled first.
A long, tired breath
that wasn't quite surrender
but wasn't defiance either.

"I thought you'd turned away."
The words came low,
as if dragged from a locked drawer.

"I thought the same of you."
A reply without armour.

The wind eased.
The river kept its steady run.
They stood shoulder to shoulder,
not touching, not speaking,
just letting the quiet

do what their pride could not.

When they finally walked back
toward the path,
nothing grand was declared.
No speeches.
No tidy moral.

Just two figures moving
in the same direction again,
step for step,
letting the evening
carry the rest.

endurings

1.

the stamen lets go?
not out of certainty,
but something close.
what it flings
won't land today.

2.

out west
you don't bury grief.
it breathes beneath
cracked soil
and smouldering fences.

3.

mycelium doesn't wait
for speeches.
it works in the dark?
no praise,
no parade.

4.

lichen won't ask permission.
it takes the stone
like a promise
never made
but held anyway.

5.

brittle, yes.
but some things break

and still keep holding on.
that's what lichen does.

6.
death gave lichen
no calendar.
it just stayed.
kept staying
when nothing else did.

7.
me?
i've stopped asking
for what doesn't come.
the sky's got
its own story.

8.
so i wring
what little
it leaves behind.
sometimes,
clouds bleed quiet.

9.
a calyx?
not seeking meaning,
just keeping shape.
it holds breath
like it knows what's next.

cartography of echoes

"Cartography of Echoes"

.....for Tristan R.L.

Beyond the glass of our screens?
where your bold words
crackle like summer storms,
I plot each consonant's electric arc,
charting your defiance
in starlit constellations.
Between cursor and
keystroke's muted pause,
I heed your lightning riffs?
a tempest that rattles
the keepers' gates,
swabbing pews with salted truths.
Your voice, a ferry
slicing through corporate muck,
carries me over ink-swollen waters.
In every raw confession? "*unpublishable*," you scoff?
I find harbour for the unsung.
So here's a stubby torch
in our digital dusk:
an analogue lantern
cutting through pixel haze,
where paper's grain
and screen's glow entwine,
and mateship anchors our verse.
To Tristan, whose tempests
reveal hidden shores,
may our shared maps
of grief and grit
sketch fresh constellations

in the void?
where every echo
finally plays its game.

farewell 2025

the road ahead

There are crossings the world forbids?
not out of cruelty, but because
wires, once tangled, burn the circuit.
So, some groups part ways,
and the ledger of timing and reason
closes with a sigh.

The sentimentalist in me
rails against the verdict,
wants to circle back,
to test the lock on the old gate,
to see if the latch still lifts.

But the realist?
that gravel-voiced companion?
reminds me:
to go back is to fracture the lesson,
to look back is to stall the walk.

And yet absence does not vanish.
It grows tributaries:
a hollow in the chest
that fills with rainwater,
a chair at the table
that teaches you how to sit straighter,
a silence that learns your name
and answers when you call.

So absence becomes companionly,
not by choice, but by persistence?

a shadow that keeps pace,
a hand you cannot hold
but still feel brushing your sleeve.

Paths may recross, or they may not.
The wiser course is forward,
feet steady on the gravel,
eyes open to the next bend.
But even as I walk on,
I carry the ache like a lantern?
not to light the way back,
but to see more clearly
the road ahead.

00:00, 2026

they hug at hour's stroke
and moon shines as if on cue
firework petals bloom

Moogerah spillway

The year opens
the way the lake does
when the wind hasn't yet
made up its mind.

A pelican lifts off,
slow as someone checking
whether the day is worth
committing to.

There's the faint drift
of caramelised onions
from the caravan park?
not sweet, just a reminder
that people are already gathering
for something small and ordinary.

I take the track
down past the brittle grass,
not to declare a beginning,
only to stand where the water
waits without fuss.

If this counts as a start,
it's the kind that asks nothing?
just a step,
and the willingness
to stay with it. .

All Hail! Parliament Train

it begins without warning, in stations
where crowds drift in from scattered eras,
each carrying their own small weather,
each unsure why they've gathered at all
guards arrange the platforms into patterns,
rows held steady under civic signage
promising liberties no one quite trusts,
yet everyone steps forward anyway
beyond the barriers, the land shifts tone?
dark rails running out toward fir-lined cuttings,
hands gripping luggage as though arrival
might grant a claim no border can confirm
shopfronts glitter along the concourse,
their polished windows staging a calm
that never reaches the fields outside,
where growers measure seasons by risk
travellers pause at the platform's margin,
thinking through years that brought them here,
trying to read what lies past the timetable,
a knowledge held by those who watch quietly
distance folds the shoreline into shadow,
lights from the departing carriages scatter,
and something in the air steadies itself
as the train moves on and the world keeps shaping

a single drop

Candid words begin the work:
a lifted glass, colours shifting,
a small sound caught by careful ears.
Warmth stirs beneath the skin,
like a kettle warming on a low burner.
A slow rise from hidden channels,
like a quiet tide lifting a tide?pool.
A thaw loosening the brow,
like a frozen pane cracking as breath slips out.
Ripples gather their own force,
like a child's splash turning sudden whirl.
A brief fluency pushing forward
before sinking again.
Hands idle at the edge of thought.
Unwritten lines drift downward,
like ink drops spreading on a still pond.
Fine grains collecting
like soft snowfall settling on a calm lake.
Then?
a single drop jumps.

on being pulled back

I'm not sure why
it happens this way?
the tug, the nudge,
the quiet little
well, go on then
that shows up
when I'm trying
to do anything else.

Maybe
you know that feeling too:
the poem clearing its throat
in the next room,
waiting for me
to stop pretending
I don't hear it.

And honestly,
I've tried ignoring it.
I've tried saying
not now, or I'm tired,
or let someone else write you today.
But that never works.
It only sits heavier.
So here I am again,
pen in hand,
wondering if this
is discipline or surrender
or just the strange duty
of being the one
the words keep choosing.

I tell myself I could refuse?
that nothing terrible would happen? but even as I say it,
I know it isn't true.
Something in me off kilter,
slightly off its hinge.
So I write.
Not because I'm wise,
or ready,
or even particularly inspired,
but because the moment arrived
and looked at me as if
I were the only door
it knew how to knock on.
And who am I
to leave it standing outside.

small print of prophecy

labels don't lie, but
they expect you to listen
smallprint sermons curled beneath
expiry dates and shelf dust.

the hermit runs fingers over
"best before" like it's a dare
and the jar dares back?
containment never suited truth.

canned peaches declare judgment
in syruped certainty:
"you'll fail. again."
but the hermit has heard worse
from people who smile.

there's intent tucked
deep inside plastic wrap?
layers folded like old
wounds waiting to be undone.
and so they shop
not for groceries but to rewrite
what everyone thought
they'd believe.

snake incident, 3:14pm

snake incident, 3:14pm

there he goes again?

bloke in thongs

gripping that bent garden rake

like it owes him money

chasing something near the clothesline.

grass? patchy, burnt? doesn't flinch

but i do when he shouts

"bloody hell, it's fast!"

under the hills hoist

a rustle

a tail flick

a flash

he's got it pinned.

not bad for a bloke

who once tried to hammer

a magpie's shadow.

he's wrestling

now arms and legs

scrambling like a child playing rugby

with a shopping trolley

and suddenly? it's done.

rake quivering

snake head gone

both silent.

he looks over

like he wants applause

but I just nod

and put the kettle on.

.

.

.

into stillness

Two rabbits rest beneath the tree,
soft ears alert but still,
their noses twitch.

The swing above them
rocks? a measured metronome,
its boards aware of
what it means to hold.

The sky is brushed with cloud
and streaks of rose,
the noonday moon sits
pale and full of thought?
a coin of milk, a petal
not yet dropped,
a whisper of the cold
that sleeps ahead.

They do not move.
They study light and blue,
as if the world
paused to wonder, too.
The air is soft.
The moment barely breathes.
They blink, then lean
more deeply into stillness.

descent

On the way down,
the mountain grows taller behind me.
Perspective is a trickster like that.

I feel lighter, though
nothing in my pack has changed.
Only the weight of my thoughts has shifted.

At the trailhead,
I turn once more to
the looming shape above me.

The mountain says nothing.
And somehow,
that is enough.

the reckoning of verse

The Reckoning of Verse Words do not wait. They press against silence, strain against the skin of unspoken thought, demanding release. Time does not permit softness. It carves urgency into bone, into pulse, into breath, leaving no room for hesitation. Poetry often arrives unbidden, clothed in necessity- a force neither gentle nor forgiving, only what must be said, and what refuses to be ignored. It does not settle. It does not console. It disturbs, disrupts, dismantles, remakes the world beneath its weight. And when it has done its work? when the ink has soaked through skin, when the rhythm has seized the heart? it is no longer a thing created, but a thing that owns you.

slowly turning

The stairs feel longer this year.
Nothing in the house has shifted,
yet something gives a small clink behind me
whenever a name slips loose.
A sharp snap in the wall,
and I tap the switch out of habit.

Mornings thin out.
The kettle sits cold after I set it going,
then later boils over quietly,
frost sliding across the bench
and soaking a list I should've tossed.

On the fridge, April carries a red smear.
Most squares are rubbed pale.
Pages press through each other?
May over June,
a birthday leaning on a funeral.
The kookaburra magnet keeps slipping
as if the dates drag it down.

I kept small lanterns of memory?
their glass fogs,
their wicks cough out smoke
that drifts into rooms
I'd rather leave shut.
One still holds a faint eucalyptus scent,
though some days it's only dust.

The rooms feel scooped out.
The air thickens.
The walls give off a low static,

as if the house is holding its breath
longer than I manage.

A cupboard door clicks on its own.
I blame the house,
though maybe it's the weather.

Still, I move.

A step.

Another.

One of them out of order.

Somewhere between beats
I check the kettle again
and find it warm,
though I don't recall touching it.

but you are still here

Your rivers remember,
even as the land shifts.
Not just water, but memory?

a pulse beneath the stone.
Time does not erase, but reshapes,
yet you are still here.

con-flakes

Con?Flakes

They sell us breakfast in boxes,
bright mascots with teeth too white
to have ever chewed regret.

Each flake a sermon:
fortified with iron,
but brittle as promises
signed in disappearing ink.

I pour them anyway,
a cascade of counterfeit crunch,
the milk foaming like applause
for a trick I've seen before.

Nutrition panel reads like scripture?
thiamine, riboflavin, niacin?
a trinity of syllables
to sanctify the sugar.

And still, spoon after spoon,
I swallow the fraud,
grinning like an accomplice,
because even a con,
when toasted just right,
can taste like victory.

mason

Mason

Maladjusted,
A? self?important,
Self?styled prophet of brickdust,
Ornery in his refusals,
Nonce of the guild,
he struts the scaffolding
as if mortar itself
sows his allegiance.
Yet masonry is older than pride:
stone upon stone, a wall rises
from the rubble, arches bend
toward each other like
clasped hands, and even
the humblest clay
becomes a dwelling.

We build not with perfection,
but with what the earth gives?
shards, sand, timber,
the stubborn weight of granite?
and in the joining,
habitation is born.

blisspoint

Blisspoint

The chemists know it:
a curve on the graph
where sugar sings loudest,
before the tongue grows numb.

The marketers know it:
a dial tuned to craving,
not too much, never too little,
just enough to keep you
coming back for more.

And we know it too?
that moment
before laughter becomes hysteria,
before love curdles into need,
before the glass tips
from savour to stupor.

The blisspoint,
not paradise, but a razor's edge:
a sweetness balanced
on the lip of ruin.

Step too far,
and the song turns shrill.
Hold steady, and for one breath,
you taste perfection?
then it vanishes,

as all true bliss must.

Tale of the Bucolic Buccaneer

Tale of the Bucolic Buccaneer

He pillaged turnip fields,
not galleons?
a terror to scarecrows,
a scourge of hayricks,
his cutlass nothing more
than a sharpened hoe.

The villagers whispered:
he sails no seas,
only the pond behind the mill,
commandeering a rowboat
with a flag stitched from laundry.

Yet he swaggered,
boots muddied with conquest,
pockets jingling with stolen apples,
declaring each orchard
a colony of his crown.

And when the sun set,
he retires to the tavern,
ordering milk with a pirate's growl,
boasting of battles
against windmills and geese.

So the tale endures:
not every buccaneer needs
cannon or coast? sometimes

the plunder is laughter itself,
and the map leads
only to the next meadow.

crow, at the edge of the yard

"Crow at the Edge of the Yard"

A crow lowers itself
into a scatter of restless ants,
lets them climb the dark lift
of its wings.

Each tiny body
moves with its own intent,
a restless swarm working
through the bird's old grit.

Nothing grand occurs?
just a creature allowing
the world to work on it,
letting small lives
soften what it carries.

Nearby, a currawong watches,
head angled,
as if weighing the practice,
as if wondering
what it might feel like
to let the ground
do its quiet labour.

Not every bird
takes up the same ritual.
Some stand apart,
listening to the low stir

of their own feathers,
waiting for a moment
when the world
might touch them differently.

riddle of the two kin

Riddle of the Two Kin

One races the ridge
in a full coat of weather,
glinting as it moves.

One waits on ice
bare as dawn,
set neat for the table.

Which is the naked one,
which is the dressed?
the runner in its living jacket,
or the quiet figure
with nothing left to shed?

motion obsessed

Limpets and lemmings,
champions of inertia,
heralds of the status quo.
In their unwavering passivity,
they reveal the absurdity
of our frenetic world.
Limpets, unmoving,
a satire of steadfast conservatism,
clinging to tradition,
to their familiar rocks.
Lemmings, wandering,
a sardonic parody
of aimless ambition,
drifting through life's liminal spaces.
In their silent revolution,
they invite us to question,
to reflect on our own pursuits,
our own values,
in a world obsessed with motion.

Nipper

"Nipper"

A small dog waits
beside the brass horn,
ears lifted,
body held in that soft readiness
only devotion can teach.

Once a wanderer,
he learned the shape of shelter
in the warmth of a single voice.

Now the room is quiet,
yet he leans
toward the horn's bright mouth
as though a familiar breath
might rise again
from its painted metal.

Brush in hand,
he works the canvas again,
colours deepening
around the small dog's frame.

The horn waits, bright at the rim,
and the dog leans toward it,
steady as breath before a word.

Nothing moves in the room
except the faint shift of his ears,

as though some quiet spark
might rise from the metal
and meet him halfway.

dust to defiance

"FROM DUST TO DEFIANCE"

Kings crumble into grit,
and the day slips
through open hands
as if the world were
built on a slope
we never agreed to climb.

One choice becomes a maze
we pace for years,
holding debates with night?birds
that perch just out of reach.

A man worries over love,
storms, and stories of the deep;
a duke mutters a truth
he should have buried;
beauty darkens at the edges
late like dusk,
and even a bird's bright call
turns the hour sharp.

Death arrives with courteous posture,
offering a seat as though
this were a gentle errand
and not the oldest crossing.

Soldiers ride toward a horizon
that will not open for them,
and the hours we have
dropped behind us

gather like stones in a pocket.

But then? flowers lift
their small colours,
and something inside us
stirs toward motion.

We learn the countless ways
to hold and be held,
to answer weight with steadiness,
to stand where pressure
once pushed us flat.

We celebrate the rough,
bright fact of being human,
the way a spirit can stay upright
even when the ground
argues otherwise.

Before the wide dark,
we build our unruly haven,
refusing the soft drift
toward a quiet end.

The path ahead is long,
the woods unlit,
yet the inner helm
stays firm in the hand.

Life is brief, yes?
and still, we
carry our vows forward.

musings on winter's nights

It is a quiet night, the air is still.
The chill of winter touches each pane.
Under a streetlight's gentle beam,
snowflakes twirl in a silent dance.

The street lies muted,
a figure moves slowly.
His steps quietly crunching
in the blanket of snow.
What is this echo
of a forgotten ache
that stirs my heart,
making it fluster?

Why does my mind drift
to a southern place
where magnolias bloom
in ornate bunches?
Petals soft
against dark green leaves,
a scene of spring
that warms the thoughts.

These snowflakes drift in gentle arcs.
From darkness they come,
to darkness return.
Within me a sudden start,
and swells and soars to every part?

As winter's grip tightens,
spring seems distant.
Yet in my soul, there shines a star.

A silent hope in the frost's embrace,
of warmer days and kinder space.

The snow keeps falling, night wears on.
In my thoughts, a springtime dawn.
Though winter reigns with icy hands,
in dreams of bloom,
my heart still stands.

Ascent

In the final moment,
Orion unleashes a blinding radiance

that dispels the damnable Eclipse.
The kingdom is bathed
in light once more,
and Sol, though weakened,
smiles with pride.

Orion has transformed
from son to sun,
fulfilling the prophecy
and securing his legacy.
The people, awestruck,
hail Orion as the new Sun.
His light is different from his father's
 ?unique and full of promise.

He stands tall,
a beacon for future generations,
ready to guide them
through any darkness.

at first light

Let us rise with the dawn,
Embrace this new day's promise.
Tomorrow's whispers guide us;
Innocence of past years fuels our steps
Together find peace in Present's embrace.

reflected light

I used to chase the wind,
now I walk with the breeze.
The maestros' tunes are whispers,
carried by the evening air.

Spicy nights have turned serene,
flavours of youth now mellowed.
The mornings no longer dreamless,
each day a canvas of reflection.

The sun-pierced terrazzo is cool,
its warmth a memory, not a need.
My skin bears the map of years,
my soul, a reservoir of quiet strength.

The journey of miles and dreams,
led to the stillness within.
In this tranquil place,
I will find my peace.

Are Ya Done!?

"Are?ya?done"

Mum's bottle clicked open
with that sharp brown whiff
that lived somewhere between
seaweed, metal, and trouble.

Knees barked from gravel,
elbows freckled with the day's
too?fast cornering,
and she'd dab that amber drop
that rolled like syrup
but bit like a tiny spark.

"I?o?dine," she'd chant,
stretching the vowels
as if the sound itself
could clean a wound.

"Are?ya?done?" I'd fire back,
half?brave, half?whinge,
because the sting always arrived
a blink after the colour bloomed.

It painted my skin
in rusty constellations,
left blotches on shirts
that never washed out,
badges of honour
for a day well?spent
skidding through dirt
and inventing danger.

By evening, the marks
glowed faintly on my shins,
a kind of sunset souvenir
from the rough?and?tumble hours
before the streetlights flicked on.

And Mum would hold the bottle up,
give it a shake like a tiny rattle,
and ask again, softer this time,
"Are?ya?done?"

But the day never really was.
Only paused.
Waiting for the next sprint,
the next scrape,
the next amber bloom.

the plunge

A page becomes a field.
Not a window, not a mirror,
but a surface that shifts
as the reader steps across it.

Each line tests its footing.
Each break alters weather.
A form does their speaking?
content only follows its lead.

In this wired village,
we build with what we have:
scraps of signal,
a handful of tools,
and the will to keep shaping
whatever comes next.

a celestial journey

In the stillness of Welsh nights,
Seryddwr stands, silent, thoughtful,
Eyes lifted to the vast tapestry above.

Stars, like ancient runes, tell stories
Of time and space, of birth and death,
Unfolding mysteries
only the patient can unravel.

Their hearts beat
to the rhythm of the cosmos,
Each star a note in the infinite symphony,
Guiding their hands, their thoughts,
their dreams.

In the quiet, under Cymru's starlit sky,
They find their place in the universe.

be still

boy, hiding where, long enough;
guarded in heart and thought,
left scarce a clue and when you do
lead to elsewhere; screening those
eyes that seek to spy on you; boy

one day, when all lay at your feet
they shall realise you had no real
privilege, special or otherwise
you were and are just like every
other creature that ever breathed

and this world is as it is, after all--
you learn to hide & dodge & roll
each bruise, each strike, each scar
are silent witnesses to journeys far;
be still; envy is no friend of yours

The Treaty of Scatterings

The Treaty of Scatterings

(standalone poem from the *Housecat Mythosphere*)

There was a time you imagined
you lived in this house? your house,
with its mortgaged walls
and predictable walls
and towels folded in thirds.

Now? You're the bewildered
ambassador in a territory
ruled by small velvet despots,
whose laws are scribbled
nightly in litter, string,
and trails of half-chewed oatgrass.

Last night's armistice ended at dawn.
The hallway bears the remains:
a decapitated mouse-toy in the laundry,
a solitary sock dragged like a trophy
to the feeding station.

They meet at the kitchen threshold?
Committee of Soft Paws convening.
One begins the ceremony
by knocking a spoon to the floor.
The other counters with a mournful gaze
into the empty food bowl as if to say,
"We remember scarcity. It shapes us."

Crumbs on the rug? War paint.

Spilled tea? A diplomatic incident.
And the lotion bottle that vanished?
Likely taken hostage and
ransomed for chicken treats.

You try to sweep,
but the broom is suspect.
They watch its bristled
motion like a new invader.
When you bend to retrieve the fallen cap,
you feel their eyes on your back:
Not judgment. Not forgiveness.
But a reminder? that
governance is earned by those
who stoop to retrieve the things
they once believed beneath them.

And yet: they follow you.
From kitchen to couch
to window to sleep.
You, their clumsy envoy.
Them, your impossible parliament.
All treaties end in purring.
Now, let's push open the gleaming,
dust-moted doors of memory...

the rubber plant

"The Rubber Plant"

In the dim of an early hallway
a rubber plant keeps its steady shape.
No incense, no vaulted stone ?
only the faint drift of last night's air
and the cupboard settling once.
Its leaves hold a muted sheen,
not bright, not reaching,
simply keeping their place
as if the room leans on that steadiness.

I've seen other plants in better light ?
the ones set near wide windows,
the ones trimmed for company,
the ones that catch the full run
of a warm afternoon.
But none of them hold the same
quiet, durable measure
this one keeps without asking,
rooted in its corner.

Not the pothos that climbs
whatever it's given,
not the fern that needs
its careful portion of moisture,
not the aloe that waits
for a hand to remember it ?
none of them carry
this plain, unforced bearing
that stays even when the day shifts.

There is something in the way
its weight settles into the pot,
how each leaf keeps its line,
how nothing about it calls for praise.

A kind of grounded clarity,
a way of being that doesn't falter
when the room grows still
or the light goes thin.

And so I notice it most
in the quiet parts of the house ?
when the kettle cools,
when the hallway holds its shape,
when the cupboard gives that small click.
There, the plant stands as it always has,
steady in its corner,
keeping the room from drifting.

observance

In the heart of winter, I stand,
Surrounded by a landscape of white silence.
The snow blankets the earth,
Each flake a delicate touch,
Soft, yet unyielding
in its cold embrace.

The trees are skeletal fingers,
Reaching up to a sky of muted gray,
Their limbs bare, stripped of life,
Yet beautiful in their stark simplicity.
I watch, an observer, detached,
My breath visible in the frigid air.

I do not impose
warmth upon the scene,
Nor do I seek comfort in its cold beauty.
I accept it, as it is,
A world of stillness and quiet.

In this frozen moment,
I find clarity, a vision unclouded
By the warmth of human emotion.
The winter world speaks in whispers,
Its language one of stillness,
A silent meditation on existence.

I stand, HuMan in the snow,
In tune with the cold,
Seeing the world without colour,
Without sound, without feeling,
still seeking all the same
to understand.

Montgomery Slyde

Montgomery Slyde

Montgomery Slyde entered
every room as if it were a courtroom,
his shoes rehearsing
arguments against the floorboards.

He wore his grin
like a counterfeit medal,
polished daily, but prone
to tarnish under close inspection.

His pockets rattled
with IOUs and bottle caps,
souvenirs of victories
no one else remembered.

Yet in the tavern's dim light
he could spin a tale so fast
the rafters leaned in,
and even the doubters
paid their silence as tribute.

Montgomery Slyde?
a man forever balancing
on the thin rail between
bravado and collapse,
still somehow managing
to tip his hat before the fall.

she rides the wind

Through the moor she whistles, her presence a crystal shard, slicing through the night air scented with damp earth and pine. Windows tremble, trees yield, cries ripple across the barren plains.

Her voice, an echo of distant storms, resonates from the ocean's depths, a spectral cry that chills the bones. She strides under the moon's watchful eye, her shadow entwining with the silver glow, extinguishing campfires, uprooting trees.

I feel her power, standing in the open field, the wind tearing at my clothes, her icy touch a shiver down my spine. She is not just a force of nature, but a harbinger of change, a messenger from realms unseen, bringing both fear and awe.

A gust summoned by her breath, an unbound, restless spirit, never tethered, always moving, stirring the air like scattered leaves, disrupting the stillness, a force both feared and revered.

let poem's arise

In a quiet cocoon, a poem begins to form,
like a chrysalis, delicate and silent.
Each word emerges, bringing warmth to hearts.
Once overlooked, now taking flight in the glow of a solitary, late hour.

Discarded thoughts, once cast aside,
transform into the poem's core,
like a caterpillar turning into a butterfly.
Ink and page perform their alchemy,
line by line, stage by stage.

A battered note, a torn-out sheet,
evolve into verses, rich with life.
Every critic's wound becomes
a driving pulse thrusting creativity forward.

As each line finds its place,
the poem's rhythm breathes, grows,
unfolding like wings from a chrysalis.
Art's true power, in its essence, illuminates,
releases the spirit of renewal.

Occam's Razor

In the realm where truth and lies clash,
perceptions twist and often hide.
The simplest path might show the way,
but shadows' cast may lead astray.

If I speak a lie and you believe it,
does simplicity reveal it?
If you doubt the truth,
does that make your belief the allure?

Occam's Razor, sharp and keen,
cuts through the fog where truth is visible.
Yet in the heart, where doubts linger,
the simplest truth isn't always clear.

In the mind, where beliefs take root,
the line between truth and lie can blur.
Who is right and who is wrong
when perception's grip holds strong?

Friendly response

Caught in a tempest, body betrays, The mundane morphs in peculiar ways, A silent storm within you brews, With each wave, a piece of you it chews.

The office now a heaving deck, Unsteady ground, a wretched wreck, Fingers grip with fervent might, Against this inner sea's cruel fight.

Eyes seek anchors in the gloom, Against the tides, the waves that loom, Each heartbeat echoes stormy tales, Each breath a ship on windless sails.

In this battle, chaos reigns, Turbulent thoughts, unending strains, Yet, within, a warrior stands, Facing nature's wild demands.

May calm return, like dawn's embrace, And steady once more, your pace, For every storm, a calm does bring, A reminder, you'll weather anything.

the promise of mourning

The Promise of Mourning

Let us rise with the dawn, not to greet light, but to carry the weight of what the night has taken.

Embrace this day's promise? not of ease, but of endurance, the slow stitching of absence into fabric we can wear.

Tomorrow's breeze guide us, not as bright banners, but as muted hymns, reminding us that even sorrow has its own compass.

The innocence of past years fuels our steps, not as nostalgia's sweetness, but as embers we protect against the wind of forgetting.

And so, together, we find peace in Present's embrace: not by denying the ache, but by letting it stand beside us, a companion at the table, teaching us that mourning, too, is a kind of promise? to remember, to continue, to rise.

of thunder and fire

if we stretched out rumpled sheets
sunlight opalescent shades shape

there on an open square
each step without a care
a wan smile through thundrin' pain
unrolls each flash, a stumblin' stain

moonlight polishes over every scrape
if we had struck out in utter defeat

unknown quantity

quantity unknown

a complete unknown

to know and be known

a solitary room

Grief is a solitary room,
a place you sit in alone.

Over time that room stretches;
grief becomes a shared landscape,
the mourned being landscape itself?
not gone, but part of the air
that settles around each connection.

It turns into a kind of weather
you move through
and breathe.

north & south

The first sound from the south
came out all wrong ?
too sharp, too directional,
as if it had borrowed
the northern script.
Up north, a reply arrived
with far too much depth,
clearly meant for the south,
but trying to pass itself off
as something cultured.
The serviette, affronted,
rose like a modest shield.
"Not my job to cover that,"
it muttered in a crisp fold,
yet held its post anyway,
fluttering with judgment.
Under the table,
the cloth felt the sudden fanning.
"Oh no, not again," it sighed,
ruffling along its hem.
"You make the mess,
I take the blame ?
typical."
The tooter hid behind the serviette,
pretending to study the ceiling.
The burper sat statue?still,
hand working overtime
in the linen shadows.
Chairs paused.
Cutlery hovered.
The house, long?suffering,

let the linens argue it out,
as if this north?south confusion
were just another Tuesday.
By dessert, the serviette
had regained its dignity,
the tablecloth had forgiven nothing,
and both culprits sat upright,
each convinced the other
had caused the weather shift,
while the linens whispered
about boundaries and workload
for the rest of the night.

?I see You?

"Oel ngati kameie"

You lift your hand first?
fingers to brow,
then out toward me,
a small path drawn in the air
to show you're willing
to meet where sight
isn't just sight.

I answer by staying still,
letting the room settle
until I can take you in
without reaching for more
than what's here.

It's the kind of seeing
that doesn't check the surface?
more like agreeing
to stand close enough
that whatever you carry
can be held
without being taken.

You say it softly,
as if the phrase
is a doorway left open:
I see you,
not with the eyes,
but with the part
that steadies itself
when another person

steps forward.

And I return it
in the only way I know?
by letting you matter
in the plain,
workmanlike way
two people can
when they choose
to meet each other
without turning away.

10-01-2025

word-painted pictures
along with each season's change
colour-splashed meanings

Brugge (September reverie)

resonant birdcalls
estranged from
credence

awash in a tumultuous
ocean of tears
on the *otherside*
of this open pond

selling bananas
and flaky croissants
afford but little
to allay one's tremors

corkscrew, reprise

In the cellar,
green?glass vessels lean
against one another,
their shoulders dust?padded,
throats sealed tight.
Some wait decades,
stoppered against the tremor of hands
that might one day twist them open.
Others burst early,
foam rushing into the air
as if silence itself were unbearable.
In the corner,
labels blur into shadow,
contents thicken, slow as memory.
Elsewhere, bottles press
against their corks,
restless, uncontainable,
a fizz straining at the seal.
The spiral waits,
metal glint tucked in a drawer,
its teeth patient for the grain,
its lever poised for release.
When the cork yields,
the throat breathes open,
and the table waits,
shadow stretched
like a raised eyebrow.

What is it?

What Is It?

It sits on the table,
shapeless as a rumor,
weightless as a debt unpaid.

You ask, *what is it?*
and the question itself
becomes the answer's disguise.

Is it the itch behind the eye,
the word you almost spoke,
the silence that arrived
before the door could close?

Is it hunger,
or the memory of hunger?
Is it joy, or the echo
of joy rehearsed?

The realist shrugs: it is nothing,
a trick of light, a shadow
without a body.

The sentimentalist insists:
it is everything,
the pulse beneath the floorboards,
the ghost that keeps the chair warm.

And so we circle,
naming, un?naming,

until the question itself
becomes the only thing we trust.

What is it? It is the asking?
the restless hinge
that keeps the door from rusting.

looking glass

*does breaking mirrors
really alter my features?
looking glass-cripple*

Looking Glass?Cripple

The mirror fractures,
seven years of superstition
scattering across the tiles.

Does the face fracture too?
Or only the certainty that
one surface could hold it whole?

Each shard insists on
a different me:
one with a crooked grin,
one with eyes too wide,
one already fading at the edges.

I gather them like evidence,
a jury of splinters
deliberating my likeness.

The question lingers?
is the wound in the glass
or in the gaze?

Looking glass?cripple,

I learn to walk with
reflections that limp beside me,
each step a reminder
that identity is less a portrait
than a mosaic? sharp, uneven,
yet still catching the light.

alone

The lychgate stands alone,
Wooden beams stretch
toward the sky,
Silent witness
to countless passings,
Once a haven for grieving hearts,
Now, memories linger
in the weathered planks,
Hoping for the days
of comfort to return.

Letters from the Sanctuary

Letter 1: From Gertrude to Tom

Dear Tom,

The humans are preparing for their festive season again. I see the lights and hear their laughter, but it fills me with dread. We must act now. The escape plan is ready. Tonight, when the lights are brightest, we make our move.

I've also received a letter from our cousins in the New World. They've faced similar perils but managed to find freedom. Their advice will be crucial for us.

Yours in hope,

Gertrude

Letter 2: From Tom to Gertrude

Dear Gertrude,

We've made it to the forest edge. The farmers are close behind, but we're moving quickly. Barnaby found an old cabin with supplies. There's talk of a sanctuary. We must reach it.

I've read our cousins' correspondence. They mentioned hidden paths and safe houses used during their own escape. We'll follow their guidance.

Stay strong,

Tom

Letter 3: From Cousins in the New World to Gertrude

Dear Cousin Gertrude,

We've heard of your plight and wish to help. When we fled, we used the dense forests and underground tunnels to evade capture. Remember to stay low and move under cover of darkness. There are sanctuaries established for escaped livestock?places of refuge where you can find safety.

Enclosed are maps and tips from our journey. May these help you and your flock find freedom.

With best wishes,

Your cousins in the New World

Letter 4: From Gertrude to the Flock

My dear flock,

We've found the sanctuary, a place where we are safe. The rabbits guided us through the final stretch, following the advice from our New World cousins. We are free from the shadows of the past harvest festivals and the butcher's knife. Here, we will build our new lives and remember the journey that brought us here.

With all my heart,

Gertrude

Letter 5: From Tom to the Farmers

To the Farmers,

You'll find no turkeys here. We've taken our fate into our own wings. This is our story of survival and resilience, aided by our cousins from across the ocean. Maybe one day, you'll understand the true meaning of freedom.

Best regards,

Tom

an unveiling

In verses plain, I seek to find,
The essence clear, unshackled mind.
For words can twist and often blind,
But truth remains, by verse defined.

Amid the forest of ornate lines,
Truth is a tree, its roots entwine.
In simple verse, its presence shines,
Clear and bright, not left behind.

With each word chosen, crafted tight,
The poet's quest, to bring to light.
Not lost in a maze of endless night,
But clear in verse, the truth takes flight.

In tangled woods of prose, we stray,
Yet in verse, the truth holds sway.
A path of words, both clear and gray,
Guides us through, and is our stay.

two eras in one land

Austen's Regency holds its posture,
rooms arranged for watching
and being watched.

Thompson's Victorian
weight moves differently,
a street?side shuffle,
a coat pulled close.

Drawing rooms
with their measured warmth,
city corners with their blunt weather.

One world practises its courtesies,
the other keeps its questions
under a lamp.

Social manoeuvres,
small hesitations,
the quiet work
of choosing one's place.

Then the harder wanderings?
a figure walking until the hour thins.
Two eras set beside each other,
not braided, just sharing
the same long hallway.

Each with its own kind of light,
each showing
what a person carries home.

she that rides with the wind

Through the moor she whistles,
heartless intent disrupts the night.
Windows rattle, trees sway,
cries echo in the deserts.

Screams rise from the ocean,
a moonlit stride brings a chill.
Creating a breeze, her presence haunting,
restless in her journey.

Elegy for Francis Thompson

In shadows deep where silence reigns,
A poet's voice, a lingering strain,
From streets of gloom to realms of light,
He penned the words that touch the night.
Born 'neath Preston's modest skies,
A fragile child with soulful eyes,
He sought the heights where muses sing,
And found the weight of life's hard sting.
To seminary halls he went,
A quest for faith, his spirit bent,
Yet poetry called, a siren's song,
In words of beauty, he belonged.
Through London's mist and opium's haze,
He wandered lost in night's embrace,
But even there, his verses grew,
In anguish deep, his truth he knew.
The Meynells saw his inner fire,
A flickering flame of pure desire,
They nurtured him, gave hope anew,
And from his pen, the muses flew.
Lizzie's care, a gentle touch,
A heart so kind, it meant so much,
In darkest times, she held him close,
Her love, a light, a rare repose.
From Chatterton's tragic plight,
To Tolkien's worlds of mythic light,
From Shelley's heart, to Crashaw's soul,
Their echoes made his verses whole.
Through Chesterton's encouraging hand,
He found his voice, a poet grand,
Kilmer's tribute, a timeless ode,
Their words, with his, forever flowed.
As twilight fell, his body frail,

In Wales' embrace, he told his tale,
His final breaths, a gentle sigh,
To meet the heavens by and by.
He fled the nights, he fled the days,
Through arches old and winding ways,
Yet in his flight, he found his peace,
A soul released, his pain's surcease.
God sets His poems in thy face,
A testament of love and grace,
In death, your voice shall never cease,
Dear Francis, may you rest in peace.

another done

Are?ya?done"

Mum's bottle clicked open
with that sharp brown whiff
that lived somewhere between
seaweed, metal, and trouble.

Knees barked from gravel,
elbows freckled with
the day's too?fast cornering,
and she'd dab that amber drop
that rolled like syrup
but bit like a tiny spark.

"I?o?dine," she'd chant,
stretching the vowels
as if the sound itself
could clean a wound.

"Are?ya?done?" I'd fire back,
half?brave, half?whinge,
because the sting always arrived
a blink after the colour bloomed.

It painted my skin
in rusty constellations,
left blotches on shirts
that never washed out,
badges of honour
for a day well?spent

skidding through dirt
and inventing danger.

By evening, the marks
glowed faintly on my shins,
a kind of sunset souvenir
from the rough?and?tumble hours
before the streetlights flicked on.

And Mum would hold the bottle up,
give it a shake like a tiny rattle,
and ask again, softer this time,
"Are?ya?done?"

But the day never really was.
Only paused.
Waiting for the next sprint,
the next scrape,
the next amber bloom.

five characters

Five Craft Characters

1. MASON

Maladjusted, swaggering on scaffolds,
A? self?important in dust?stained boots,
Snarling at apprentices,
Ornery as lime and grit,
Nonce of the guild,
yet loud as a foreman.

But stone remembers none of this: arches clasp, walls rise,
and even his crooked hand
leaves a habitation standing.

2. SMITH

Sullen at the anvil,
Muttering curses with each strike, Inflated by sparks
as if they were applause,
Temper short
as the iron he quenches,
Half?drunk on smoke and clangor.

Yet the forge sings
louder than pride:
horses are shod,
hinges swing,
and the hammer's rhythm
outlasts the man who wields it.

3. POTTER

Proud of his wheel,
Overbearing in critique,
Throwing more tantrums than bowls, Territorial about clay,
Easily cracked as his own glaze, Resting only when the kiln cools.

Still, the vessel survives him:
cups to hold water,
jars to keep grain,
a quiet utility shaped
from mud and fire.

4. WEAVER

Wary of others,
Egotist in pattern,
Arrogant about warp and weft,
Vexed by every knot,
Ever certain her loom is law,
Rigid as the frame she bends over.

Yet cloth is communal:
blankets warm strangers,
tapestries tell stories,
and threads, once crossed,
bind more than they divide.

5. MILLER

Morose in the morning,
Insisting the grain owes him fealty,
Lording over sacks of wheat,
Laughing at peasants' hunger,
Ever counting coin,

Resigned to dust in his lungs.

But the wheel turns regardless:

water drives stone,

stone grinds seed,

and bread rises in ovens

far from his bitterness.

?snake eating its tale?

"Snake Eating Its Tale"

A coil of midnight ink,
it curves upon itself?
a story rewritten with every bite,
each swallow a stanza erased,
each rise a stanza reborn.

Its scales glint like borrowed lines,
snatched from yesterday's pages,
then chewed into new syllables
that hiss in the pulse of now.

A narrative of endless dusk,
where beginnings blur with endings,
and the final word is always
the one it hasn't yet spoken.

Here, the serpent is poet and poem:
devouring its own legend to taste
the freshness of unspun myths,
a living glyph of perpetual return.

"dramatic monologue from Arthur Ross"

Dramatic Monologue from Arthur

(Arthur stands at the prow, wind tangling his cloak.)

"Mother's voice rides on every gust.
I feel her laughter in the creak of timber,
her courage in the spray
that drenches my face.
Here, where ancestors carved
their promise into ice,
I stand untested yet unafraid.

The storm is but a gauntlet
thrown down by fate?
and I will meet it.
Each wave that thrashes
our bow is an echo
of those who dared before me.

I will honour their passage,
not as a ghost but as living proof
that home is earned
in every heave and haul.

Astragard awaits,
its towers a beacon
of all I once was?
and all I will become.

Let the world tremble
at the name of Arthur Ross,

for I carry both
the weight of legacy
and the fire of my own forging.
This voyage is mine."

"time is of the essence"

"time is of the essence"

We compete for every moment?

ikkoku o aras??

as dawn spills gold across the plains,
each breath a bargain struck in morning's hush.

We vie for each minute and each second?

ippun ichiby? o aras??

while shadows flee the sun's fierce blaze,
hearts pounding in the space between ticks.

Today's single moment is worth a thousand gold coins?

ky? no ikkoku wa senkin ni ataisuru?

so let us gather sparks before they drift to dust.

Time is money? *toki wa kane nari?*

and time is life? *toki wa inochi nari?*

two truths entwined in every pulsing hour.

Time flies like an arrow? *k?in ya no gotoshi?*

so sharpen your gaze, track its silent arc,
lest it pierce your dreams and vanish.

Treasure time? *toki o oshimu?*

with careful hands and eager eyes,
for in its fleeting pulse we find our only chance.

nail-pierced hands

Nail-Pierced Hands

Cut and Paste My Love:

As I rise from
the gutter's darkness?blind,
under the porch-light's flicker?
nail-pierced Hands
grip mine and pull,
then wash me in Blood.

By Nail-Pierced Hands, I walk on.

Copy and Paste My Mercy:

As I lean toward
that gutter again?
hear the church-pew creak?
see the nail-piercings'
shadows on my Hands
as I reach out through
the same flood of Love.

By Nail-Pierced Hands, I walk on.

Paste and Save My Heart:

As we walk each day
together side by side,
closer to Your glory?
step by step toward Home?
Rooms built by Nail-Pierced Hands.

grimoire

like a visual scroll
a fresh version of you
as if turning a page
in a grimoire of becoming
or
perhaps another opening
a different kind of sigil?
one rooted in reclaimed desire
the threshold remains open

"curioser"

SHE: Poem 9 ? "curioser" (circa '85)

she eyes my neon lace-ups, says they're too bright for her shade she grabs my Walkman, then sighs that i never play her song she claims to loathe the mall, yet waits by the arcade stall she begs for space, then frets when i inch a step away

she swears she's not jealous, but she jots down my locker code she calls me too eager, then scolds me for not asking more curioser and curioser, her rules flip-flop each day my heart's a tangled tape, rewound by her every whim

each time you leave

wreath of words sprout
upon doorstep bed
beneath a far-looking moon,
whisper to ear
upon fading footfalls,
daily gaining near
nestled between gaps
of tiles and grout
waiting for mistletoe
to be hung again
warm embrace shall follow,
as fingers fumble for keys
that will turn the locks
that leave me fettered . . .
 . . . each time you leave

Jacobin paranoia

warmth envelops
dissolving the
bustle and noise
liquid stillness
offers but a momentary
tranquil *once upon a time*
it is so easy to
drift off and forget

here the watery balm
soothes celiac rashes
a moment's reprieve
that shuts out reality
provides sombre retreat
cares float away
until unwanted thoughts
stray with blistered report

it is quite possible
through bolted locks
to lay victim
to home invasion
for someone to play
Corday to one's Marat
a hapless victim stabbed
at home in one's bath

Rotterdam

Red train rested at Rotterdam station
Over the border to meet a friend
Trains all over Europe pass here
Today is a bright and sunny day
Every person glows in its brightness
Realising not a former disaster, that
During the 40's destruction erupted
Along these very streets, evacuated
Murderous bombs wreaking havoc

never in the hands

what's solid keeps shifting,
a kind of slow slide
beneath the day's footing?

a small body of water
giving way to something larger
held just past the edge
of keeping it together?

and still the errands call,
each list a small task
to steady the shake
that never shows in the hands .

drifter's melody

drifters' melody

I see us there,
still tracing our lines,
A fractal caught
in the same design.

The shadows have stretched,
the layers have grown,
Since the days of secrets
we called our own.

You may see a fool
for the way I run,
But I am the shadow,
and you are the sun?

Two parts of a pattern
that won't untie,
No matter the distance
or how many years drift by.

an architect's aperture

"An Architect's Aperture"

He unfastens
the heavy wool of "Always,"
setting aside measurements
of who he was told to be.
The wardrobe was never a cage,
just a temporary structure?
stiff silk and silver pins
holding back the wildness of light.

He lays the mask upon the vanity,
not as a broken thing,
but as a tool
that has finished its work.
The porcelain face
?steady, silent, sure?
can finally rest.
Beneath the linen,
the fractal begins to breathe.

It is not a decay,
but a blooming of geometry:
the way a vein mimics a leaf,
the way a lung mimics a tree,
the way his own wayward heart
mimics the pulse of the stars.
He sees the fool in the glass
and recognizes a brother.

Not a victim of the chase,
but a runner who knows

that "being caught"
is just another way of being held.

The layers fall away
until he is thin as a shadow,
wide as the wind,
and finally,
beautifully,
unmet by anything but truth.

letting you go

Letting You Go

She packed the things into a box?
a little toy, a shiny rock.
She closed it up, her hands were slow,
and whispered soft, "I'll let you go."

She didn't cry, just looked around,
at sky and trees and muddy ground.
She smiled a bit, then said goodbye?
like clouds that leave but don't all cry.

"she? poem number 8

SHE: Poem 8 ? "she doubts if i waited" (circa '85)

i sat by the mall's neon fountain, Walkman humming The Smiths,
mixtape cued for her arrival?
and she doubts if i waited.

i circled the pizza stall,
pepperoni grease on my thumb,
clock hands creeping
over the arcade? and
she doubts if i waited.

the quarter in my pocket buzzed, primed for her Pac-Man high score, food-court lights flickering in
my eyes? and she doubts if i waited.

my boombox heart skipped
every chorus screaming her name,
but her shadow slipped past me?
and she doubts if i waited.

"she cares"

SHE: Poem 2 ? "she cares"

she bumped into me in the hallway
my books went flying?
i braced for laughs
but she knelt down
and asked so softly, "you okay?"

her smile felt like sunlight
sneaking past clouds

my heart tripped
over its own surprise
i mumbled "i'm fine,"
though i barely knew
all afternoon i kept replaying
her voice ?that gentle question
echoing in my head

did she mean it?
i don't want just a guess?
maybe this time
i'm certain: she cares.

of witnesses

Waves of fresh wind dance,
stirring thought,
Sunlight strikes, and skies shift,
darkened and undone.

The canopy of words ripples,
foliage alive, in rhythmic undulation.
Cloud cover whispers,
lifting the finite chest, as stars drift,
witnessing mutely
our fleeting moments.

Each breath kisses the horizon,
soft and lingering, blending
thought and memory
in a seamless weave.

We watch as our
thoughts glide along, a melody
woven in crystal water streams.

"she orders me about"

SHE: Poem 10 ? "she orders me about" (circa '85)

she orders me to carry
her Trapper Keeper down the hall,
to keep my neon Reebok laces
hidden at the mall.

she orders me to stand behind
the yellow line at the bus stop,
no leaning, no humming
my boombox's latest pop.

she orders me to dial her
payphone at the arcade's back wall,
then scolds me when the coins
clink too soft or stall.

she orders me to let her
board first on the rattling train,
to grip her Walkman,
to never complain.

she orders me to fetch
her Slurpee in grape?
no cherry swirl? and holds
my hand like
I'm her awkward pearl.

everywhere I go? school desks,
food courts, station seats?
I'm just her neon puppet,
dancing to her beats.

"and now it's my fault"

SHE: Poem 7 ? "and now it's my fault" (circa '85)

she slams the locker door
when i pass by
and now it's my fault.

she replays her mixtape note
with a frown
and now it's my fault.

she spins her neon bracelet
off my wrist and
now it's my fault.

she hides behind
the bleachers' shadows and
now it's my fault.

she glares at my Rubik's Cube
in mid-scramble and
now it's my fault.

she stomps away
from the arcade's glow and
now it's my fault.

but i swear to the boombox
at full blast? i didn't
break her heart, and yet,
it's still my fault.

"she's gutsy"

SHE: Poem 5 ?

"she's gutsy" (circa '85)

she's gutsy?
skating backward
down the schoolyard hill,
neon laces daring gravity
to catch her.

she's gutsy?
front-row at the arcade,
quarters flying pure
on first try at Galaga.

she's gutsy?
calling in a song request
live on radio, heart through
the receiver, unedited.

she's gutsy?
laughing in summer storms,
splashes of lightning
in her wake.

and me? totally awed,
boombox heartbeat pounding,
trying to stay rad enough
to keep up.

"fearing her own reflection"

SHE: Poem 6 ? "she fears her reflection" (circa '85)

she freezes
'fore the bathroom mirror,
neon shadows tracing every edge,
like a scratched VHS
looping her face,
and she doesn't press play.

she taps the glass
in jittery bursts,
as if her reflection is
some wild graffitied wall
she can't decode?totally mystified,
and asking why the image
stares back so hard.

she once rocked
neon lipstick like armour,
now she peeks through slitted lids,
heart thumping
like a boombox on max,
dreading the girl she almost knows.

i watch in puzzled awe,
wondering which side is
the real deal? the gutsy skater
lighting up arcades,
or the girl who flinches
at her own glow?

the topography ahead

"The Topography Ahead"

I found a spark
in the dark of our raft,
"Go to hell" whispered,
on this soul-forged craft.

But then came the Boy
with his books and those keys,
With "style" in his pockets
and "rules" on his knees.

He spoke of life's honours,
the way things are done,
The "siv'lized" method
of "having our fun."

And my new-grown spirit,
so fragile and thin,
Bowed down to the logic
of original sin.

I played at his games
while a man stood in chains,
I traded my blood
for his theatrical stains.

For Tom knows the map,
and Tom knows its law,
And Tom sees the merit
in every tiny flaw.

But the heart has a limit;
this soul has a gate,
It can't be bartered
for a "siv'lised" state.

If the price of our parlour
is Jim in a cage,
Then I'll smudge out the ink
from its very last page.

The town is a shadow,
their rules are a lie,
A slow-motion choking
beneath our blue sky.

So I'll head for that sunset,
Its wild, glowing, red?
I'm lighting out
for the topography ahead.

riverine rite

"Riverine Rite"

cedar planks forget the shore,
as current claims its kill;
What once was spoken,
speaks no more
Beneath the water's will.

They that stepped
from off the bank
were bathed in silver light;
old distinctions slowly sank
into descending night.

Between prow and steering oar,
No contract binds the two?
No labels dragged from dusty lore,
No names for what is new.

They do not catch each other's eyes
To find a settled place;
They watch instead, a heron flies,
through stars in outer space.

A third thing pulls the heavy raft,
A cold but holy weight;
carving soul in ancient craft
leaving mind in wait.

For why define a moving tide
Or cage the wind in breath?

They simply journey side-by-side,
Beyond the reach of death.

The river shifts, the brothers change,
The banks are never known;
Their path vibrant as is strange,
they're never left alone.

For in the flow where nothing stays,
Their formless bond is free?
A prayer of foam and quiet days
That seeks the boundless sea.

nightwalk

"nightwalk"

his tears used to wake him
from an unduly prolonged delay
his smiles used to hurt him
for their beauty his heart dismayed

their love had locked them up
and threw away the only key
and mile upon mile of wishful thinking
pushed them further away, though free

he looked into a well-used mirror
to find the Devil he danced with was himself
and the fireflies that once lit their canopy
have also lost their former glee

hallway split

One waits in the hallway,
coat already half on,
the air too tight
to stand in any longer.

The other moves
through the lounge
with a kind of reckless grace,
turning up the music,
wanting the walls to feel it.

Between them,
the floor holds steady,
bearing both the urge
to step out and the urge
to set the whole place alight,
as if this room were built
for exactly this split.

unsigned horizon

"unsigned horizon"

The horizon stays unsigned,
a gray span that won't take a mark.
The raft holds by its own inward pull,
nothing formal keeping it together.
No place for the shore to grab hold,
no cut in the wood for a hook
to turn it toward the wharf.

When the cloud cover hardens into a wall,
and the air drops in its own weight,
the mind has to adjust to that dimness.
It learns to breathe underwater,
to keep a small counter?current alive
while the world asks for a choice
it has no right to ask for.

The shore's light keeps searching?
looking for a gap, a point to press?
and meets only a surface
that offers nothing back.

The sun rises needing no agreement,
moving in its own slow way,
a gold that holds even as dark pushes in?
gold behind the grey,
heat that stays when the rest goes cold,
steady enough to keep
the raft in one piece.

wilderness kills

"wilderness kills"

They speak again of cool gardens,
of melons split wide,
of leeks softening in a pot
that never hurried.

We hear it,
but the day's work won't pause
for old flavours.

The path ahead is dry,
the load uneven,
yet it's ours to carry.

We steady the camp,
set the pace,
keep the bowls filled?
not with what they crave,
but with what will hold them
through another stretch of light.

soul-trained

"Soul Trained"

Most afternoons,
the place held its usual quiet,
the kind that settles
when you're the one
turning the lock from the inside.
You'd drop your bag by the heater,
let the screen take up its post,
steady voice filling the room
like a light left on
for whoever needed it.

He'd close the show
the same way every time?
a line shaped to meet you
at the frame,
marking the edge of the room
without pushing you through it.

*"And as always in parting,
we wish you love, peace, and soul."*

That was the moment?
the house paused, waiting
to see which way you'd go.

Then the click as the set went dark,
the room folding back
into its usual shape.

You'd step out,
down the narrow stairwell
that carried
every footfall
from the building,
its railing cool under your hand,
evening air rising to meet you
as you pushed through
the side gate?the metal giving
a short, tired rattle as it
settled back into place.

this is not goodbye

neither is it hello
or is it?

.
everyone's got their reasons
even those that say they don't
everyone's got their seasons
whether they live it or won't

our ears are designed to hear
and lips were made to kiss
the batting of your lashes
turns stony hearts to bliss

for a time and half a time
this pen will cease to scribble
until reasons find their clime
then again, resume their ripple

hail to embark

"hail to embark"

He waited at the stop,
streetlight clouding above him,
timetable long past meaning.

In the window of the shelter
he caught himself ?
not a threat,

just someone
 who'd missed
 too many departures.

A bus passed
 without slowing.

He didn't lift his hand.

antebellum (before the war)

He waited at the stop.
A moth hit the streetlight once
and moved on.

Tattered timetable
was out of date.
He read it anyway.

In the glass of the shelter
he saw himself, nothing special ?

just a face in a surface
doing what faces do.

A bus passed.
He didn't signal.
It wasn't his route.

she asks of me

SHE: Poem 4 ?

"she asks of me" (circa '85)

she asks of me
to leave my Walkman off
so i actually hear
her laughter drifting by

she asks of me
to lend my neon shades
when the sun's
too bright for shy smiles

she asks of me
to stash my mixtape lineup
and trade dance
in the arcade's strobe

she asks of me
to call her on the payphone?
no excuses about
dead quarters or fear

she asks of me
to slip on my roller skates
and keep pace with hers
around the rink

she asks of me
to admit my favourite song?
not hide it behind
a Rubik's-cube of cool

she asks of me
to crack my shell wide open
and toss in a beat of honesty
and i'm learning?
one neon heartbeat at a time?
how to answer every one
of her lighted asks.

she's given me

"she's given me"

she gave me a half-smile sticky,
a borrowed eraser
when mine turned to dust.

she didn't give me a text
when i messaged "hi,"
and didn't read the sigh
behind those two letters.

she gave me front-row seats
to a single glance,
butterflies buzzing my chest
in dizzy circles.

she didn't give her hand
when i stood too close,
left me pacing
empty halls of questions.

she gave me hope
wrapped in glittery sticky notes,
pocket-sized promises
i replay at night.

she gave me despair
like erased words?
blank pages yelling
that i'll never know...

what she's given and

what she's kept
builds me up, breaks me down,

but here i stand, heart wild,
waiting for the next
gift of her kindness.

keeping peace

...an abstract of "unsigned horizon"

The horizon stays unsigned,
a grey span that won't take a mark.
The raft holds by its own inward pull,
nothing formal keeping it together...

while the world asks for a choice
it has no right to ask for...
The shore's light keeps searching?
looking for a gap, a point to press?

The sun rises needing no agreement,
moving in its own slow way,
a gold that holds even as dark pushes ?
heat that stays when the rest goes cold,
steady enough to keep
the raft in one piece.

Steady enough to keep the raft in peace.

amid the tumbleweed

"amid the tumbleweed"

the track runs through scrub and dry weed, nothing fenced, nothing shaped, just a wind that moves what it wants. I keep on, each step a small bargain with thirst, the day pressing on with its plain heat. thoughts offer shortcuts, quick fixes, but the ground stays blunt. a few creatures hold their distance, steady in their watching, a kind of unexpected company. i wait for whatever comes next, not as triumph, not as some grand turn, but as the slow work of learning how to stand here without flinching. and in this bare stretch, something steady meets me? quiet, enough; held close.

sermon excerpt

Sermon Excerpt ?

Pentecost Sunday, 2004

"Let us not mistake
'*tongues of fire*' for drama alone.
Sometimes the Spirit descends
as a leaf in your laundry,
or a child's whisper in the bath.
These too are *flame*?
less spectacular, perhaps.
But just as holy."

a little lower

"A Little Lower"

We were shaped on the sixth day,
set down in grit and daylight,
hands still smelling of ground.

It's said we sit just under the bright ones,
not quite lifted, not quite settled,
a middle place we carry without complaint.

Most days we feel small enough-
like something meant for soil,
held together by simple parts.

Yet there's a hint of more in us,
a quiet charge that doesn't draw an eye,
waiting for its season.

Seeds know this kind of waiting.
They keep to themselves,
take the fall without protest,
trust the dark to do its work.

If the stories are right,
we're no different-
a people in early form,
kept low for now,
growing toward a shape
we can't yet hold.

inroad spring

"Inroad Spring"

the track runs through low scrub,
a thin line worn by weather
and countless soles before.
springs self reveal in small ways?
a warmer breath of wind,
a looseness in the soil.

I keep on without rush.
those who steadied me
walk with a quiet weight,
not pushing, not pulling,
just keeping their pace
as the ground shifts under us.

behind me, the old house sits
with its doors half-closed.
old worry turned sharp,
loose talk grown tight.
I leave it as it stands,
rooted in its own season.

out here, the brush moves easy.
a few birds lift and settle,
unbothered by my passing.
the road gives only what it can?
dust, a bit of warmth, spring
bubbling from dirt and stone.

taking up arms

"*Taking Up Arms*" (© 2001) `

War is come upon us,
imposing our timid nation
to rise up and take arms.

I will march off along
with the rest of your sons
to that sea of blood,

Supplied by the rivers
of our throbbing wounds;
while honour and patriotism
collide in barbaric swill -

Tearing open our bodies
in those fields of hate
in that cold strange land.
This war is not our own;

We did not ask for this.
But as sons of our Fatherland,
we march off to war -
to fill that crimson sea.

a willing silence

"a willing silence"

Each morning the stairwell landing
widens a little, then sways.
Not enough to alarm,
just enough that I steady myself
on the rail I've held for years.

The larder behaves differently now.
Shelves bare when I stand before them,
full again when I step away.
Jars settling into place
as if they've been waiting
for the sound of my footfall
to move.

The hardwood floors
give off a long, low groan,
the kind a ship makes
when it loosens from the pier.
Boards shifting under me
as though the house
is preparing to leave.

Motes drift in the hallway,
but not in their usual paths.

They forget the routine
they've kept for decades,
turning in slow, uncertain spirals
as if the air has lost its memory.

The stain under the window
has dried three times this week.
Each time it returns
in the same shape,
a faint outline
that refuses to stay gone.

The clock hands
no longer strike their marks.
They swing loosely
between one tick and the next,
never quite landing,
ever quite losing
where the hour should rest.

All of it watching,
all of it waiting,
as if the house
has reached the edge
of what it's willing to keep quiet.

influence

a momentary voice today
tomorrow a meaningless echo
a frail, faint legacy

infirm affectations

Infirm Affectations (2010)

` violent welts form on raising skin
crackled blisters spew invectives
brown curled grass pretend affection
warning label on confection

shut the door on maddening din
fettered brow pegged down with whispers
burnished brass collect intrusion
warranty voided by contusion

flush out and swab, dress and bandage
splint and cast - immobilise, recuperate
the shuffling of disciplined feet
wards off the pungence of defeat

the shark silhouette

"The Shark's Silhouette"

Far out,
a darker band sometimes drifted
under the surface-

not a body,
not a fin,
just a passing shift
in the water's weight.

The minnow watched it
as though it were a sign,
a shape to grow into,
a future already outlined.

But the band kept moving,
unconcerned,
unfixed,
never slowing enough
to become anything at all.

through the blue

"through the blue"

At the public pool,
a man in a faded visor
lectures the swimmers
about moisture.

He taps the laminated sign
as if unveiling a doctrine:
"You're too wet.
That's on you."
The lifeguard looks away,
busy with the quiet work
of keeping people afloat.

Nearby, a gull drags a chip packet
across the concrete-
its own small protest
against unsolicited guidance.

Someone on the steps
wrings out their towel,
not in shame,
but because towels do that
when they've done their job.

The visor-man continues,
warning the pool-goers
that taking water seriously
will ruin their day.
He gestures at the deep end

as though it's a moral failing.

But the swimmers
slip beneath the surface anyway,
moving with the calm certainty
of people who understand
that immersion is part of the craft.

No one argues.
They simply drift sideways,
letting his voice dissolve
into the background hum
of splashes, lane ropes,
and the faint carnival-air
of cotton candy drifting
from the kiosk.

In that small shift-
that quiet refusal
to carry someone else's posture-
the water steadies around them,
and each stroke
reasserts a simple truth:
sensitivity is not a burden here.
It is the instrument
that keeps them moving
through the blue.

side by side

"side by side"

...without much ceremony
the orchid on window's sill
shifts room's first light?
a new bloom opened overnight,
its blue?lavender edge
catching recall in its wave
a palette from long ago.

From the kitchen
comes a soft crack of corn
warming in a pot,
each burst taking on
a faint ivory sheen
as it unfurls.

Beside it, sliced bread
toasts to a steady warmth?
moving through the house.

We don't tally the years.
We read them in plants
that have stayed with us?
in their thicker stem,
by way of kept seasons
choosing to open again.

The rooms look much the same
as they did yesterday,
but the bloom shifts the place
by a fraction?

a quiet reminder carried
in colour and morning warmth
that another year has settled in,
and we're still here,

doing the next thing
side?by?side.

before the ink runs dry

Some words live best
in the weight of paper
and the scent of ink.

This piece remembers
the feel of writing
before the world went weightless.

I wrote when ink could smudge,
when paper drank each word like rain,
and margins bloomed with afterthoughts
in the tilt of a hurried hand.

Now letters glow in silent rows?
no scent of pulp, no weight of page?
only the pause of a waiting pen
and the arc of an unseen cloud.

Still I dream of the press's breath,
of type that bites and leaves its mark,
of holding something warm and real
before the quill falls silent.

shower

raincoat has come off.

water is now touching skin.

poem begins afresh.

the other impulse

when language fails, let impulse lift

when you are old

when you are old

When morning cradles you in gentle glow, And kettle's whisper stirs your sleepy mind, Recall how laughter helped our spirits grow, And spread warm light in every heart you find. Many cherish the brightness of your smile, And treasure stories from your steady hand. But one will hold kindness through every mile, Know quiet strength through all time's shifting sand. Pull out that album, turn it, leaf by leaf, And count each tender moment captured there-- How every image bear both joy and grief, And shows us deeply of your love and care. And when twilight shifts softly on your day, And quiet wraps the rooms you've warmed so well, Feel our friendship echo where shadows play, A gentle song no passing hour could quell.

a morning like this

A morning like this
asks for a slow wander,
whatever the street forgets
pockets open to ponder:

A bolt, a feather,
 a bit of wire
 bent by weather ?
each one a quiet suggestion.

By midday the table
gathers its small findings,
and a shape begins to form,
unplanned, but allowed.

the horn keeps its own track

the horn keeps its own track

the shard warms in his grip,
a small crescent with a dusk?lit core.
no script on it,
only a faint rise and fall
like breath caught in resin.

it brightens when the path bends.
it dims when he drifts toward the upper air.
it flares when the ground beneath him
starts to forget his weight.

he walks with it cupped in both hands,
a quiet tool,
a childhood remnant
that never learned how to lie.

in the under?islands,
another boy feels a tug along the scar
where the crescent once grew.
he follows it through stone corridors,
through rooms that still carry
the heat of old machinery.

they meet at the inlet
where the sky folds low.
no triumph.
no collapse.
just two figures
and the small glow between them.

the shard steadies,
as if the world has stopped spinning
long enough
for both boys
to step out of the dark
without losing themselves.

a daily challenge

to lessen the gap between object and word

turning clean

"turning clean"

endless turns mark the hour,
the hand moving
through whatever pain waits,
its cold watching

set against a heart
already bruised by the ringing
keeps its own pace,
a kind of steady proving

the day carries
a cry held low,
quiet running through
a stretch of dark,

the road longer walking
twilight thinning into a soft fading
the weight settling,
the breath tightening

smiles try to hold the daylight,
brief staying
grief rising again,
its circle returning

affection gone thin,
a ghost drifting morning
the wish for what was still there,
still reaching

inside this drift,

this looping turning
we look for a small lift,
a breeze easing

the chest for a moment,
enough of a clearing
to keep going, to find
a corner worth keeping

not the words

"This poem is not the words.
It is the world, the feeling,
these words point to."

briefly

briefly

Morning's borrowed light
slides in, unasked;
a soft spill across the floorboards,
easy as breath on a cool pane.

Mourning's borrowed light
comes barrowed in,
uncasked from whatever vessel
kept it sealed 'til now?

a gentle run that steadies

over its greaves the heart still wears
for one who grieves,
a release that settles the chest,
making weight briefly bearable.

threads continue on

threads continue on

The room carries a few movements
at the same time, none asking to be first.

A single remark ends up doing the work
of the whole conversation without meaning to.

Two angles sit beside each other,
neither folding into the other,
both steady in their own way.

One line settles the room, not by force,
just by being the place everyone returns to.

A reply moves slightly off to the side,
keeping its own path
while the thread continues on.

as the bugle fades

"ANZAC 2026"

A faint drift of camp?smoke moves across the oval
as neighbours gather in a loose ring,
boots scuffing dew?dark grass.
Someone reads from an old diary,
paper soft at the folds,
its words settle over us
like a weather front passing slow across the range.

The march is smaller this year,
but each step lands with its own weight.
Kids lean from verandas with cardboard poppies,
a brass line warms the air near the cenotaph,
and the crowd parts gently
so, an older man can steady himself
before placing a wreath cut fresh from his yard.

By afternoon the town thins back into its rhythms?
shops half?open, dogs restless at the fence.
A few of us stay near the memorial garden,
letting the day breathe out around us,
aware of how these gatherings
shape the way we carry our shared work forward
long after the bugle has faded.

creekside picnic

"creekside picnic"

A bank slants toward late light,
grass pressed flat where the blanket settles.
Water shifts in a slow pattern,
small rings widening near the fallen branch.
A thermos rests in the shade,
its warmth fading into the ground.
Clothes lie in a loose heap near reeds,
one sleeve brushing dry earth.
Footsteps compress the bank,
and the surface adjusts around a quiet entry.
A breeze moves through the treeline,
lifting one corner of the blanket, then letting it fall.
Upstream, a faint sound carries,
not close enough to follow.
The day holds steady,
as if waiting for the next small change.

a carrying forward

"a carrying forward"

I move through the yard before dusk settles,
checking the latch on the side gate,
feeling the day thin out around the shed.
A faint breeze brushes the tin roof,
and I steady a loose plank with my boot,
letting the last light find its way across the grass.
You step into the same yard later,
noticing how the air cools near the tanks,
how the boards shift under your weight.
Your hand grazes the rough edge of the post,
and you pause, listening for whatever the evening
is willing to give without asking for more.
He walks the boundary line at dawn,
boots damp from the night's drift,
eyes tracing the fence where the wire sags.
He kneels to check a rusted hinge,
lifting it just enough to see the gap beneath,
then rises, brushing dust from his knees.
A yard settles into its own rhythm.
Light moves across corrugated iron.
Grass bends, straightens, bends again.
A gate shifts in the breeze.
Somewhere, water gathers in a gutter
and carries the day forward.

slope

slope

Patterns in weathered stone
carry the same recursion
found in cloud?break and thaw.

To speak of erosion
is to misread the work;
better to stand inside

the quiet fulcrum of the ridge,
the dense interior
where the shift is sensed first,

long before the slope gives way.

curtain call

curtain call

Fabric goes up, not grandly?
just a panel pulled aside
to show a room arranged for looking.

Painted air, yes,
but the kind you find in old halls
where someone once patched the ceiling
and didn't bother sanding it smooth.

People step through,
wearing whatever the night required.
Not costumes? just layers
they've learned to carry.

They move the way workers do
when the job is familiar
and floorboards know their weight.

Nothing here pretends to be truth.
Nothing here pretends not to be.

misreadings

"note on a misread message"

The piece was written
to mark a boundary,
a simple line
drawn around the work
so it could rest
as it was made.

But the reply arrived
as if the note
were meant for someone else?
a gentle lesson,
a moment of reflection,
a reminder to slow down.

The message was shifted
from the table
to the mirror,
its purpose softened
into something
easier to carry.

Yet the line remains:
some works ask only
to be left intact,
their first intention
held steady
without revision.

Not every request
is a call to reflect.

Sometimes it is simply
a place to stop.

writing on sand

"to write on sand"

Where it not for one to play buffoon
or to say of none we're way too soon
involved in peddling mass hysteria
when it's been held in each posterior
consciousness - makers of peace are
blessed. So ever to be near or far
we at our disposal have in hand
a power to write upon our sand.

poetical query

does it take a poet to read another
or a poetic soul to catch a glister
do poems fire all we can muster
o'er lines traversing verses light or dire
why do poems keep an inner pyre
poetry dares conspire 'round what we admire

where your hand was

last night's rain?
the mug still warm
where your hand was

the fade

whence there was a love
but no language between you
now mem'ries remain

meme-ma

.

Once,
so long ago now, it seems;
Every thing touched
& everywhere
that I turned,
her scent permeated
both air & skin.

.

cooler months 2026

"*cooler months, 2026*"

The air cools a little earlier now,
and the days settle into their slower shape.
People move through the streets with a kind of ease
that comes when the heat steps back.

I write from that steadiness.
Not to instruct,
not to lift a curtain on anything hidden,
but simply to meet you here,
in this season that asks less of us.

If a poem arrives,
let it be something you can walk into
without needing to know the layout.
A room with enough light to see by,
and enough quiet to stay as long as you like.

What I offer is small:
a way of noticing,
a way of keeping company
as the evenings lengthen.

If you find yourself in these lines,
good.
If you don't,
you're welcome, all the same.

The door is open.
The season begins.

show you

"show you"

Seasons are a fractal,
repeating the same geometry
in ice as it does in leaf.

To 'show' the fall is
to witness collapse;

I would rather you feel
the center of gravity?
the stillness in the marrow

that knows descent is coming
but does not flinch.

shrug off this dis-ease

shrug off this dis-ease

Understand the tilt,
the tension within this frame,
The way the dis-ease
flickers like a dying flame.

I'll shrug the weight of it,
the 'how' and the 'why,'
If you'll just be the metric
that doesn't tell a lie.

Don't ask for a confession
 or a fevered plea,
Just watch the blazer settle?
 and finally see me.

vespers of neon

Vespers of neon

The night loosens its grip as we step out,
streets still washed in the last colours of neon,
a soft shimmer running along its gutters
like a river deciding whether to keep going
or give itself over to morning.

A warm breath moves through the quiet blocks,
not an old enchantment now,
but something gentler,
as if the city itself were exhaling after the long hours,
letting us glide through its half-lit corridors
with the ease of dancers who know the floor by heart.

We drift past corners without hurry,
letting the world slide a little under our feet,
the sky paling just enough to hint at what's coming
but not enough to break the spell.
Somewhere far off, a tune from the night before
tries to rise again, softer now,
as though it knows it's time to step aside.
And in this almost-morning,
before the first edge of light finds us,
we move through the last of the neon's glow
with a quiet certainty
that the night has not ended-
only changing its shape.

mother, mother (2026)

Morning comes softer now.
You rise without rushing,
the house no longer waiting
for your first move.

I visit with small things ?
fruit cut the way you like,
a cardigan folded on the chair,
the kettle already warm.

You smile as if surprised
that care can travel in this direction.

There was a time
when every hour depended on you:
school forms, scraped knees,
the quiet way you steadied the day
before anyone else was awake.

You never called it sacrifice;
you just did what the day required.

Now the rooms keep their own order.
The children are grown,
the lists shorter,
your hands gentler with their tasks.

You speak of the past
as if it were a long corridor
you once walked daily
and now visit only when needed.

This afternoon,

you sit by the window
watching the street settle into evening.
You say you like this stage ?
the ease, the space,
the way the world no longer
asks so much of you.

I don't tell you
that I still measure myself
against the quiet strength
you carried for years.

Instead, I refill your cup,
adjust the blanket at your side,
and let the moment stretch
between us ?
as if the years have shifted
while we weren't looking.

waiting for a turn

waiting for a turn

A worker chalks a line
across the pavement,
measuring where the new
conduit will run.

He doesn't speak of purpose;
the gesture is enough?
a quiet geometry that keeps
the district breathing.

Nearby, the library's back door
is propped open.

Inside, volunteers sort
the taped-up boxes
of donated recordings:
voices from meetings, vigils,
street festivals that ended
before I was born.

Someone has written
dates on the lids,
not as verdicts,
but as coordinates for
whoever comes next.

The room feels like a place
where the future leans in to listen,
waiting for its turn
to continue the work.

what actually is

"what actually is"

moving through a city route,
noting the way a bus door opens,
the way two strangers negotiate space

at a crossing,
the way afternoon light
angles across a shopfront,

all rendered in a single,
continuous line that feels improvised
but what actually is deliberate.

yard

And the yard?
unruled, unindexed?
keeps offering these small, stubborn gestures,
each one a pivot away from an old script,
each one a way of being here
without bowing to the frame.