

Far To Go

Howard Osborne



Presented by

My poetic Side **P**

Dedication

To those who may stumble upon my poems, and not fall - at least physically

About the author

Howard Osborne is retired from several previous scientific and business careers during which he travelled widely, but now has more time for writing. He has written short stories, poems, a novel and scripts. Others may regard some of his writing as dark or ironic, yet he maintains a positive outlook on life. He lives in Yorkshire, England with his wife from Alabama.

summary

NO MUSE

SKY AT NIGHT

DUST

THE LOOK

NO LONGER SCARLET

AN END TO IT

SECRET WATER

A DULL LIFE

TECH TONIC

ANOTHER DAY

REFLECTIONS

PROSPECT

BORDERLANDS

ONLY WHAT MATTERS

PLACES

MANNEQUIN

BLUE SKIES CALLING

POSITIVITY

VERTIGO

RESEARCH

SYZYG

NO MORE WORDS

PARADISE

HEARTFELT

CONTRARY VIEW

WINNING VOICES

UNEXPECTED

A KIND OF KINDNESS

BEYOND INSANITY

SOUND SURROUNDS

WINTERTIME

ONE TREE FIELD

THE LAST NIGHT WITH THE DEVIL

SELENE

UNHEARD WORDS

NOTES ON A SCALE

WHEN SPACE WHISPERS

THE WATERFALL

TURING TEST

THE LAST COMMAND

HIGH TEA FOR I.T

TWO EMPTY MINDS

REDEMPTION ROAD

IS THIS LOVE THEN

THE DRY

ONE GOAL

FIRSTBORN

KERNEL OF HOPE

THE DAY THAT ANGER DIED

WHEN TIME STOPS

A STILL MOMENT

ROMANCE

BOYS TOYS

DEMONS IN DAYLIGHT

AFRICAN DESTINY

ODE TO THE MOTHER LODE

RESIDENCY

THE NATURE OF REALITY

NO MUSE

NO MUSE

I have no muse to prompt any new words
My imagination's source is only my head
Inside my right brain, the crunch of gears
As nerve endings spit sharp darts of ideas
Dry wells of inspiration do cause me tears
Think for yourself, as some poet has said
And keep separate, the whey from curds
Unlike some, who see beauty all around
I am driven only by images in my mind
Raised up from depths by mental pump
Then out of the inkwell, words can jump
But empty phrases will land with a bump
Sometimes a busy brain can be very kind
With that final line, the verse is crowned
Say it how you see it, is excellent advice
Yet occasionally, there are droughts too
When a dry searing wind blows the sand
The cause of that, I may not understand
It erodes the gist of what I had planned
I know there are feelings other than blue
And a rush of inspired words will suffice

SKY AT NIGHT

SKY AT NIGHT

I am transfixed when I see the sky at night
Stars deceive you with their twinkling light
Some are coloured, others flickering white
Far away from the cities the sky is jet black
As if someone had given the daytime back
Billions of stars, but it is focal length I lack

Beyond gravity, seeing the Earth in blue
It's our atmosphere that gives it that hue
Strong detachment from home, it is true
Out here, one is a cold and lonely entity
With three planets aligned, it is a syzygy
But the bright sun brings us our energy

But looking much further out into space
It's many galaxies jostling for their place
And will any black hole ever show its face
It seems so empty, hence is called a void
Dark gravitational pull makes it spheroid
New stars born as others are destroyed

DUST

DUST The life one has lived may be dust Blown away in the morning breeze Some contributions appear as rust As scarred iron in a world of ease Treasured memories may be skewed To fit, like a swollen foot into a shoe But with a form of fantasy is imbued As what others remember is not true Were all those years ever for naught Growing up, working, taking a wife As all relationships are now fraught And are not much value to any life Writings that others will never read A modest sum to leave in one's will Sitting alone with none taking heed Few even recognised that I was ill The seeds I planted, now have grown Photos packed away in that dusty box Others live lives that are all their own But I am kept safe with window locks

THE LOOK

THE LOOK

There is a special kind of light in her eyes
Perhaps a twinkle, and more than a glow
But then again, how could any really know
When holding her gaze, it's seeing the prize

Their effect on me is almost to hypnotise
As I am lost in a deep and wondrous void
Yet I'm sure no ruse nor trick is employed
And in others, I can almost hear their sighs

Such power and influence hangs in the air
The effect is magnetic and drawing me in
And is a most strange yet wonderful, affair
Leaving me helpless with such a silly grin

Always surprised, with no time to prepare
And I feel the ruffling of hairs on my skin

NO LONGER SCARLET

NO LONGER SCARLET

I say, now stop, look back and think
Of all the times that came and went
Just thinking naught may come of it
But now you'll be turning on the spit
The promises given, yet never meant
Made quicker than an eye can blink

A life that's just lived without regard
For other's welfare or means to cope
Strutting around like a pompous prig
See hurt from afar but not care a fig
Around the neck you'll feel the rope
There'll be no turn of a friendly card

You've been so adept at looking away
In your world of money and privilege
Built upon other's hard working backs
But I'm now aware of many new facts
As others are hanging from the bridge
I have doubts that you will last the day

In some ways, I really wish you dead
A payback to the people what is due
Between all the popinjays down here
Dressed in finery, and pale with fear
You may have hope that I'll save you
But pimpernels are not all scarlet red

AN END TO IT

AN END TO IT

It comes at last, when all is said and done
That silence, that is somehow unexpected
So sudden, like braking hard to a final stop
With passions having risen to the very top
But trapped, with everything disconnected
Never realising you might be the only one
But now a strange kind of peace dominates
And internalised arguments no longer rage
With all the time in the world to reconcile
And no hateful spectre that one can revile
No flame nor oxygen, just an empty stage
Tension disperses and no longer culminates
For once, gratitude that anger is destroyed
So, don't look back, just embrace the void

SECRET WATER

SECRET WATER

Early morning mist is now droplets on the window pane
The tearful face of condensation, a sadness it can't feign
Up high it can hide in the clouds, then later fall as rain
The atmosphere has its many secrets, here or anywhere
That few of us will ever know by just breathing in the air
With the ripples in puddles reaching out to tell their tale

When spilt liquid dries, evaporating water leaves a stain
And it disappears into the void, invisibility to maintain
Then halfway around the world may even be seen again
It's almost indestructible, no wonder that it doesn't care
Strong bonded molecule, a solvent, as one is well aware
Yet assumes a different character, falling as snow or hail

Seen by some as a pity when it dribbles down the drain
But is resented when a downpour floods a country lane
Yet its surface meniscus is a force to challenge the brain
Hydrogen and oxygen are combustible gasses, so beware
A laboratory voltameter, designed to split apart that pair
But as pure water, so clear and cold when in glass or pail

A DULL LIFE

A DULL LIFE

Peering through drawn blinds
Offers a narrower perspective
Than any wider, clearer view
When one may see what's true
But no need to be a detective
It is surprising what one finds

With just a twitch of a curtain
A glimpse of something seen
An itch that will be scratched
With little discretion attached
Yet if less than has ever been
One still cannot be so certain

A glance just around a corner
Then darting back just in time
It looks like an awkward scene
She acts like a vulnerable teen
It could develop into a crime
One should certainly warn her

Peeping over the garden wall
It is just interest, not to spy
Husband's away all this week
An excuse for one quick peek
If she's close to this other guy
Surely, no harm in that at all

TECH TONIC

TECH TONIC

I'll probably quit all this one of these days
Snarled up in this ever more technical maze
So many updates, a wonder anything stays
Our world is becoming dominated by A.I
Just accept it all, and don't question why
The speed of everything is now supersonic

Back in those early years it became a craze
By now I've really grown out of that phase
And finally learned to always avert my gaze
I did give it quite a fair go, I really did try
Now I can only shrug my shoulders and sigh
Technical evolution, well it's kind of ironic

It's now like being taunted in so many ways
All old school thinking has been set ablaze
Instructions do not work even if one obeys
Such things are by most, considered so dry
Rules are memes, so now just say goodbye
Like moving plates, they are all tech tonic

ANOTHER DAY

ANOTHER DAY

Is it one minute to midnight yet
But it won't be over then, I bet
So take it easy, no need to sweat
Just ignore that scary prediction
The end of it all is merely fiction
There'll be another day tomorrow

Dismiss all those feelings of regret
We don't pay for mankind's debt
The final date for us all is not set
From this world there's no eviction
To just surrender is a sad affliction
We'll find another day to borrow

To enjoy every opportunity we get
And never smoke that last cigarette
Those silly things we should forget
This minute to midnight depiction
With timezones, it's a contradiction
And no room at the inn for sorrow

REFLECTIONS

REFLECTIONS

Reflections are not always real
To steal one's essence is unfair
Despair, as it can be just a trick
To pick either the best or worst
But first, considering preference
Deference shown is itself is fake
To make up only an impression
Confession is quite a rare event
Never meant to explain it away
So say what you see and admit
That it was merely self delusion
Confusion may mask what it is
So quiz any hidden corrections
Reflections are not always real

PROSPECT

PROSPECT

When sun comes out after the rain
It's your smile that I then see again
No more sadness and no more pain
As a welcome relief washes over me
And I will not ask for any sympathy
As this warmth now dries my tears

Feelings pass by like a speeding train
And will leave no traces in my brain
As everything is going with the grain
No rough edges nor any burr to see
Stroking smoothly and so delicately
A brighter prospect as vision clears

Changing winds turn a weather vane
It now points to the end of the lane
A path to take and I can't complain
As I now go toward my new destiny
And that brighter future, apparently
The heart feels what my mind hears

BORDERLANDS

BORDERLANDS

I am here, in the North, this windy day
Sensing the potential of an ancient story
Across grey water, out toward the East
An island, more of a line on the horizon
Old buildings, now a low dark silhouette
With its history to tell, for those to hear

A new scene greets me as I lift my gaze
Puffy white clouds both large and small
Like mothers followed by little children
Low, as if one could reach up to touch
Moving with breezes in the atmosphere
Stretching across the cool pale blue sky

Sagely nodding as if a heavenly witness
Are these skies, that looked sadly down
On battles, to and fro across the border
Yet now, albeit having played their part
Seem both remembered and reconciled
In September's reluctantly cold sunshine

ONLY WHAT MATTERS

ONLY WHAT MATTERS

If it should ever be a four-minute warning
Or whatever the equivalent might be today
Could this actually be the very last morning
It was always inevitable, as some might say
As a new tomorrow may never be dawning
There's an acute great pressure to get away
If there is to be only such limited time left
Losing someone you love and feeling bereft

I doubt many of us have go-bags prepared
With a selection of only the important stuff
Of course, it is natural for all to be scared
The few of us that are left won't be enough
But will only the important ones be spared
Such hard decisions, but one must be tough
In those final moments, just a kind of panic
As all roads will be clogged and quite manic

A neighbour's bunker would be restricted
Such an invitation that one may just spurn
At such a time, would one be conflicted
Then priorities could take a different turn
To survival, it's easy to become addicted
Or saying goodbye as one sees it all burn
Love may be hard, with a world in tatters
But at the end it's only that what matters

PLACES

PLACES

There are places I have never been
And others where I'll never now go
But those that I am proud to know
Will always stay as images in my head
Or maybe rather in my heart instead
Closing my eyes as I recall the scene

I have left footprints on many paths
I did not always have to stray too far
Nor study night skies to follow a star
Some roads challenging, even exciting
Others were, and still are, so inviting
Yet travel can be a game of two halves

There's memories caught in a dragnet
Others just seemed to slip silently away
But there was a time, I just have to say
When one comment made me see red
I'm a tourist, not a traveller, they said
Yet I've always bought a fridge magnet

I have ventured over land, even oceans
Both the North and South hemispheres
Many thousand miles over all the years
Yet different cultures have one similarity
I have discovered in the pursuit of clarity
Like me, poor control of their emotions

MANNEQUIN

MANNEQUIN

I stand here in the corner of this dusty shop window
Half facing the street outside, with a reflective stance
As if I were contemplating such a tenuous existence
For some time now, left here alone and abandoned
Missing my colleagues, so many absent silent friends
There were days when colourful fashion dominated
Each pose selected and adjusted for effective display
Albeit still and focussed, we were in good company
But now, ever since this store closed some time ago
They left, perhaps for another location and its view
Or worse, limbs and torsos dismantled for disposal
I wonder if their heads with sightless eyes still stare
As do mine, slightly ashamed at my pale nakedness

BLUE SKIES CALLING

BLUE SKIES CALLING

How can a sky of the palest blue be so intense
When considered, it doesn't make much sense
It's subjective, so there'll be no hard evidence
Yet floodgates are open and it enters my brain
For me to think upon and let the fantasy reign
Its frequency for me, has that special resonance

Such a sky does not need any dramatic events
That colour that sunlight in the air, implements
It's a light shade of blue, that nothing prevents
Clouds and other phenomena might try in vain
But the blue sky shines through, pure and plain
Its frequency for me, has that special resonance

The hue is neither deep nor described as dense
One may analyse it or even to admit ignorance
But take a clear position, never sit on the fence
The intensity holds true and seems not to wane
Yet others might not see it, and think me insane
Its frequency for me, has that special resonance

How can a sky of the palest blue be so intense
When considered, it doesn't make much sense
It's subjective, so there'll be no hard evidence
Yet floodgates are open and it enters my brain
For me to think upon and let the fantasy reign
Its frequency for me, has that special resonance

Such a sky does not need any dramatic events
That colour that sunlight in the air, implements
It's a light shade of blue, that nothing prevents

Clouds and other phenomena might try in vain
But the blue sky shines through, pure and plain
Its frequency for me, has that special resonance

The hue is neither deep nor described as dense
One may analyse it or even to admit ignorance
But take a clear position, never sit on the fence
The intensity holds true and seems not to wane
Yet others might not see it, and think me insane
Its frequency for me, has that special resonance

POSITIVITY

POSITIVITY

I see sunshine when others see grey
But it is just the way I am, anyway
As there's something fine every day
Yet I do have to make a confession
It's just a small step from depression
Breathe deep, and try to be positive

With only some rules one must obey
There'll always be some fears to allay
Try a smile, then a brave face display
Showing no subservience or aggression
Such extremes create a bad impression
Breathe deep, and try to be positive

It's not always easy, I do have to say
It can be tempting to join in the fray
There's a bright side, come what may
Don't let anger become an obsession
Seeking joy, a worthwhile progression
Breathe deep, and try to be positive

VERTIGO

VERTIGO

A voice in my head like a baby bawling
It is not about heights, it is about falling
It's like the ground down there is calling
At least it appears to be that way to me
Yet is the thought of flying just a fantasy
But by now I should know, it is vertigo

If I were blessed with wings, I could try
To take a step and soar up into the sky
Or not, and just plummet down to die
It really cannot help, this swirling vision
It will be the clear basis for my decision
But by now I should know, it is vertigo

The feeling is causing everything to spin
And almost hurts my brain to keep it in
I should have left before it could begin
Being on this cliff edge was a crazy idea
I was hoping I could overcome this fear
But by now I should know, it is vertigo

RESEARCH

RESEARCH

In pursuit of the truth deep at its heart
Discoveries, but with no place to tether
Without all the facts, pieces slide apart
Faith like glue, can keep them together

It can sometimes be like mining for ore
Digging way down in the dust and dark
Revisiting some theories rejected before
Yet one finds that the emptiness is stark

Some hypothesis can eventually emerge
Even if one entertains some reservation
There will be confusion, needing a purge
As one seeks an alternative explanation

Research might seem as a law unto itself
Yet a lifetime of false trails do bring grief
Even if only one more book on the shelf
If all else fails, then there is always belief

SYZYGY

SYZYGY

A syzygy is when three bodies align
Such as planet Earth, moon and sun
It's a rare event, when it may come
Or the union of opposites for some
For gnostics, when two become one
But always seen as a meaningful sign

In poetry, it is similar to alliteration
Two words join with vowel omitted
Offering dominant colour and tone
In modern poems, less well-known
Once begun, a reader is committed
But rarely causing any perturbation

All those for whom Scrabble matters
It is a most unusual yet clever choice
Shortest English word with three Y's
On bonus squares, a scoring surprise
So say it loud with a confident voice
And leave other players all in tatters

NO MORE WORDS

NO MORE WORDS

It's time for action, no more words
Whether by mouth or on the page
Despite all, they have had their day
With little passion left to take away
It's now just rattling bars of a cage
Time to separate whey from curds

Diplomacy always is the first choice
Yet as an option, was ever too soft
The media want to hear them speak
Sounding so strong, but is still meek
The cameras see the fists held aloft
Now hear that tremble in the voice

Whether minority group or faction
Whenever it is rioting in the street
It's mainly fluff from all politicians
Nervously adopting new positions
Each angry nation's heart will beat
Seeking some sort of firm reaction

Yet words do still retain their power
As silently, they slip under the skin
They irritate and itch when recalled
As anger takes over from appalled
When recognising it is mostly spin
So, come the day, come the hour

PARADISE

PARADISE

I never imagined it would come to this
Such constant comfort and days of bliss
It's as if spring and summer were to kiss
A sun's warmth and hope in the breeze
Silence, except for the hum of the bees
This state I'm now in, is more than nice

A lifetime, when nothing seemed right
Years of grey, between black and white
No vivid hues, faded shades in the light
But now the bright colour has returned
There were lessons I have since learned
And was always willing to pay the price

That I somehow deserve all this is absurd
Pleasant seems to be an inadequate word
There's nowhere else I'd have preferred
I am floating gently, almost like a feather
Can this delightful state now last forever
How could one complain about paradise

HEARTFELT

HEARTFELT

The rhythm is the only thing I feel
When melody has surely had its day
It is less than a heartbeat can reveal

I'm listening to what it has to say
Determination for a constant beat
Despite it all, it tries to get its way

Rejuvenation means it won't deplete
The carrier of oxygen to cells
The blood supply that reaches head and feet

The platelets stopping bleeding as it gels
So many functions critical to all
In nature, one can find few parallels

With atrial fibrillation, heed the call
The risk becomes a factor for wellbeing
As suddenly the pressure may just fall

There is no monitor that is all-seeing
Diagnostics are an educated guess
Unlikely that two doctors are agreeing

The beat you hear is mainly systole
There's comfort in some regularity
The rhythm is the only thing I feel
When melody has surely had its day

CONTRARY VIEW

CONTRARY VIEW

A reflection that I saw in the mirror
Is never what I ever expected to see
It shows me an alternate perspective
And very disturbing, all would agree

A suggestion of a two faced identity
Neither quite what one may expect
Of a character in stark presentation
But the mirror's job is just to reflect

Maybe I'd glimpsed in that moment
Another side of me normally hidden
The image might just tell a true story
But appeared anyway, and unbidden

It is possible I can possess two faces
One kind, and the other quite mean
A few of my friends may know both
Whereas most people are inbetween

I looked once more and saw myself
At least as how I wanted to appear
But close up in a corner of one eye
I saw the beginnings of a small tear

I'll just have to live with that image
Since then, I've not seen ever again
Unlikely to have been a tear of joy
Perhaps even the mere hint of pain

WINNING VOICES

WINNING VOICES

When words come too easily, beware
Unconscious thoughts may lurk there
As a tortured and angry captive bear
Pacing to and fro, so eager to be free
To breathe and reclaim their identity
The time will come, revenge is sweet

They may not be noticed at first sight
Yet something will feel not quite right
Before exploding with a dazzling light
Yet offering a very different meaning
Whilst other words are still preening
Rhyme and metre have had their day

Perhaps not considered to be wrong
Yet stand out as they sing their song
Distinctive like the beating of a gong
To gain reader attention, they'll win
Despite every effort to reign them in
They are a language's secret weapon

UNEXPECTED

UNEXPECTED

I don't believe it can really be that hard
To just step forward, and swipe the card
If only to tell if your entry is now barred
So pass on through, as it's still authorised
Access security's poor, and I'm surprised
As towards the main escalators I now go

My route to the top floor has now begun
Up a level to the elevators on Area One
Just a single security guard, no visible gun
The doors open quietly, and I step inside
It looks like I'm alone so far for this ride
Floor eight as the indicator now displays

Two women get in, each clutching a file
Exchanged glances, yet quiet all the while
For normality's sake I try offering a smile
Both just nod in return, now on floor ten
Doors close behind them, just me again
Floor thirteen, and I know I must change

I check, and I've arrived at floor thirteen
Here I step out to see a skyscraper scene
As near to the clouds as I have ever been
An open area, and a last elevator to take
Special pass needed, but accepts my fake
So, up to the highest floor and that office

A room large enough to host a reception
So far, all's gone well with my deception
This plan well researched since inception

As the doors open, my target is revealed
And the fate of this person is now sealed
But ? Father ? why is it you that is here

A KIND OF KINDNESS

A KIND OF KINDNESS

Personal and professional leanings
Can help decide the sufferer's fate
Never the skewed politician's voice
Playing no part in another's choice
Should the time be now or just wait
As kindness has different meanings

What is all this about pressure to die
Or even guilt about being dependent
Timely death can mean now or later
But who then should be adjudicator
Not just some overworked attendant
Nor if a situation when no rules apply

Maybe it's too early for a termination
As there will be much to think upon
There's sympathy in the mix somehow
And a bit more time, one might allow
It will be too late when they are gone
And it risks causing much perturbation

Dilemmas of untreatable constant pain
For individuals and caring relatives too
Is the costly Zurich trip really required
When a local solution is to be admired
But in the end, if it should ever be you
I would sooner be with you once again

BEYOND INSANITY

BEYOND INSANITY

There's a line in the sand, but hard to see
Upon crossing it, another universe awaits
No longer the safe logic offering crutches
Just the new and strange lingering touches
But then, has one really tempted the fates
This is the alternate world beyond insanity

One may at first be feeling alone and lost
Yet soon a new reality assumes normality
With a view of before like the fourth wall
Looking at an audience, applauding it all
It feels like a theatre in some odd locality
Now remember that line that was crossed

With a brain somehow working overtime
Juggling all that's fake and what was true
All that went before, was a mere fantasy
With its filing cabinet mis-labelled sanity
Now only unanswered queries can accrue
In-trays with verses that no longer rhyme

Looking back to check a line in the sand
Runs the high risk of dramatic realisation
A future exclusively to tread the boards
With bad performance receiving awards
This new identity should be a revelation
It's a future that one cannot understand

The gap in the fence is narrow, not wide
Now even the past appears quite strange
Yet this is the present, and one of many

For the ferryman, hold on to this penny
So just wait now, for the light to change
Then I'll be seeing you on the other side

SOUND SURROUNDS

SOUND SURROUNDS

It is always about what one sees
Yet rarely about what one hears
Nature's voices are always there
Just listen to them and be aware
The rain sounds like falling tears
And leaves rustling in the breeze

To some, maybe music of a kind
A symphony, changing by season
Birds waking with a dawn chorus
As if a performance given for us
And yet always, there is a reason
A hidden message one might find

Echoes of thunder can be twinned
With a snort of horses in the fields
Chirping birds and buzzing of bees
As nature gets louder by degrees
No surprise at the power it wields
Now hear the melody in the wind

One may have not heard it before
As some sounds need a trained ear
None need any granted permission
Just listen to the natural condition
Like a fast river rushing over a weir
And waves washing over the shore

WINTERTIME

WINTERTIME

Winter always seems to be the poor relation
Unlike Spring, embraced as a cute newborn
Or summer, a smiling and sunny adolescent
Especially autumn, in its respected maturity
A comforting hand on end of year security
Yet winter is cold as a pale moon's crescent
Looking silently down on us, and all forlorn
Is there no room left for a new imagination

Yet winter could even be the ice in a drink
To make every snowman, fluffy white snow
Kid's rosy cheeks, as they slide down slopes
Perhaps there's a message in the chill breeze
In snowflakes' beauty or when icicles freeze
But now, the other seasons know the ropes
All key elements of the regular yearly flow
They are but a prelude, with time to think

ONE TREE FIELD

ONE TREE FIELD

Just that one single tree, alone in the field
Among empty acres, and nothing for miles
Standing so silently, as if its lips are sealed
This is a calmness of nature, and not wild

A tree left quite alone, as if given respect
For its age and beauty, despite its position
Perhaps it may be something to that effect
At least it's reflecting a considered decision

It still communicates via an autumn breeze
Never lonely, and so much history to share
As it's maintaining contact with other trees
Yet little of the other life around, is aware

But it does stand out and is a perfect scene
It's as a calendar, reflecting seasonal change
The bare winter branches, in silhouette seen
To Spring, with new leaf growth to arrange

Then a fashionable posing in summer's glory
Sunlight balanced by the touch of warm rain
And autumn colours offer a whole new story
But a cold winter season always returns again

Yet still it stands there, complete and proud
No human touch, but admired all the same
As only respectful farm workers are allowed
Who, over generations, will call it by name

THE LAST NIGHT WITH THE DEVIL

THE LAST NIGHT WITH THE DEVIL

So my friend, you plan to leave
It's not an option, I do believe
Stay here with me, in the warm
We can still cook up a storm
Many more contracts to sign
And realise the choice is mine
Yes, this was an intern posting
You know that here is roasting
Lots of souls still so undecided
Just tell them what's provided
A life that satisfies every whim
Choice isn't going out on a limb
But you succumbed to my pitch
All this, and yet so keen to ditch
I do admit that I never suspected
A forged signature, uncorrected
Your tenure here just for a while
Surely you'll leave with a smile
It's experience for your resume
But you'll be back again someday
You have been a good trainee
So please do not abandon me
And if you stay, I have a notion
I'll even offer you a promotion
How about second in command
With much unsatisfied demand
But if you must, just turn and go
For millennia, I've run this show
I guess soon there'll be another
Oh, have you met your brother
Just ignore that annoying whine

I've told him he was next in line

SELENE

SELENE

The moon was now merely a crescent
Resuming its full face, phase by phase
A slow process, however hard it tried
But then suddenly appeared in full view
A beautiful brunette, as if right on cue
As an image projected on my unlit side
An unexpected delight in so many ways
It began to wonder if this was a present

Her upturned face, with eyelids closed
Pouting lips seem to reach for his own
This was a big surprise to say the least
Yet it remained only in two dimensions
Perhaps triggering some new intentions
It was as if all due sunlight had ceased
And out here in orbit, no longer alone
Yet it was only a fantasy, he supposed

But the laws of the universe prevailed
Both saw the sun and continued round
The image of her that had cast its spell
Began to fade, none knowing her name
After this, nothing would be the same
Perhaps a mere dream, who could tell
Yet it was something new he'd found
Hoping next time she appears unveiled

UNHEARD WORDS

UNHEARD WORDS

There, right there, don't you see it
Just like a star or something bright
And moving too, as if approaching
It's getting larger, second by second
Perhaps a meteor or alien spaceship
Or maybe some sort of messenger
With warm tidings or fateful warning
Holding all our futures in its hands
It must be close now, almost here
I can even see a glittering gold now
As if a gift, or valuable cannonball
It's enormous, like a brilliant sunset
Dominating all of the evening skies
I'm sure it must impact very soon
I'll close my eyes and ...

NOTES ON A SCALE

NOTES ON A SCALE

A composer may plan very few surprises
But there are effects when a melody rises
It acts like a thief in one of several guises
Taking an unsuspecting heart on a journey
It's like racing towards surgery via gurney
Yet notes after rising in volume, can fall

Scaling the stave in mounting anticipation
Notes that climb clearly with deliberation
As if breath is finally one long exhalation
Yet all this is part of a clever musical plot
To let the blood flow before it might clot
As notes take listeners along with them all

Whether sung, or just purely instrumental
A sudden volume can contrast with gentle
The sound is as planned, never accidental
Although perhaps louder than was before
As one may choose when reading a score
But some musical changes can yet enthrall

However, they are all but notes on a stave
With the limited licence a composer gave
Each follows in order and all must behave
Perhaps an arpeggio or ending in a chord
The power of melody cannot be ignored
As the music demands, just heed the call

WHEN SPACE WHISPERS

WHEN SPACE WHISPERS

There are soft whispers in the still dark night
Not internal voices, but the others out there
Listen carefully, as they have things to share
Not with heavy tread but delicate and light

Few will be understood, but some just might
Maybe a deep truth that we still cannot bear
That the moon hides from the daytime glare
Whispers are chosen when kept out of sight

A universal language of respect seems right
But the quiet voice lingers and one is aware
Of new and meaningful connections so rare
Carried on the breeze, as if in joyous flight

Is it the stars that are whispering their plight
Or sensing our own as we all stand and stare
Perhaps it's their way to show how they care
No fading to black, but to shine pure white

THE WATERFALL

THE WATERFALL

Swept along in the turbulent rapids
Flailing arms, and gasping to breathe
It came so quickly, I was not ready
Rushing towards the waterfall's edge
Then just nothing, just ice cold mist
With the tons of water, falling down
Never thinking that I would survive
I tumbled fast then was drawn under
Instinct made me reach to the light
To inhale at last, and hope still lived
Carried along, but at a slower pace
Seeing dark greenery of river banks
As if in line, kneeling in subjugation
Yet ignored, as water flowed past
Towards its very distant destination
And carry me there, agreed or not
Until I reached up to grab a branch
And pulled myself out of the river
To collapse and sigh at my saviour
Perhaps the first time in that role
And yet for me, it will be the last

TURING TEST

TURING TEST

It may sound a little fascist and even dictatorial
But as part of my 'emperor for the day' fantasy
I'd make populations subject to the Turing Test
As the world needs intelligence more than ever
At least show common sense, if not too clever
Then from those who pass, even if not the best
Selection by lottery for each to give their energy
Applied to govern, in a manner not imperial

But no wriggle room for those with pretensions
Or claims of special status in yesterday's world
Each would have to commit to public scrutiny
Of incomes and outcomes, externally vetted
Plus all the cost benefit analyses, once netted
With effective policing to manage any mutiny
And at least for a while, leave the flags furled
Giving support for innovation and inventions

Intelligence also must be of the emotional kind
The ability to read people as well as dry reports
Yet there is room for all those who do not pass
Just never to be placed in jobs that are crucial
As there are plenty of markers that are fiducial
No longer peering through rose-coloured glass
We can cut a swathe through all those noughts
And celebrate all the new wisdom that we find

THE LAST COMMAND

THE LAST COMMAND

Cold grey silent and deadly
The submarine glides deep
A world almost unto itself
Company in a steel cocoon
Nosing into foreign waters
With boundaries unspoken
So careful not to be traced
Missiles for an armageddon
Hatches open, warnings on
All prepared to be released
Millions probably unaware
Onboard, a trembling hand
Opening and reading orders
Keys turn once in the locks
Awaiting the last command

HIGH TEA FOR I.T

HIGH TEA FOR I.T

A mixture of flicking and tapping
Yet I never hear people clapping
Android meant a robot in its day
But I suppose it is, in its own way
All now addicted to social media
Beware the fake news it'll feed ya

But all this is not seen as real I.T
A bit like unfashionable high tea
More of ordering food on the go
Life is no longer gentle and slow
Everything's now only via an app
Be wary of the subtle online trap

Windows was never all that great
And took me decades to tolerate
I do admit that I don't use Apple
A new OS with which to grapple
But in Basic, I really used to code
Back then, it was more a la mode

Before the worldwide web existed
It was Telex numbers, as so listed
Now across the ether, it's memes
And nefarious scamming schemes
I am sorry, but I never did think
This would take me to the brink

TWO EMPTY MINDS

TWO EMPTY MINDS

Can an empty mind sense another
As breezes blowing down corridors
Hearing the scrape as they conjoin
Each a hole the size of a large coin
Now are linked, with a silent pause
A vacuum, from which to recover

One's offer is just an empty spoon
No sustenance to bond any brains
And no sparkling logical reasoning
Just a pinch of powdery seasoning
And therefore no memory remains
Dried up now like a wrinkled prune

REDEMPTION ROAD

REDEMPTION ROAD

The path to salvation is like the equator around the world
A vast circumference that seems to almost have no ending
Not a tropic that offers a more modest distance to traverse
Even though anguish felt along the way can still be a curse
And with awareness of ocean depths, as one is descending
Relief is ever slow to show its face, like a flag tightly furled

A road to redemption can be long and challenging for all
One may meet other pilgrims and penitents along the way
But sins begin to cut the soles of bare feet, mile after mile
Yet a prospect of finding peace at last will make one smile
It takes time and determination to tread each painful day
Forgiveness is not be dispensed from some ATM on a wall

It's not some Galician camino one might walk as a tourist
Nor any big white church and a photo to remember it by
Making such a journey is not any sort of recreational trip
With alternate darkness and light, like it's a Moebius strip
No need for any form of incantation or lamentable sigh
Nor any joke or wry smile from some sort of humourist

For some, the path can feel like a rough and stony track
But for me, it's a journey with no time to pause en route
This will never be resolved with a mere verbal confession
It's the time for humility, and no instances of aggression
Perhaps in my case, there's been too many to compute
I just hope it isn't necessary to turn around and go back

IS THIS LOVE THEN

IS THIS LOVE THEN

Am I the only one who isn't really sure
When love comes knocking at the door
The face one may not at first, recognise
Then trying to stifle that look of surprise
It is supposed to make one ask for more
But never knowing quite what's in store

You let them in yet can a smile say it all
A growing fear of being set up for a fall
Such suspicion from a previous haunting
And early full commitment was daunting
If not allowing it to progress, it will stall
Like running headlong into a brick wall

The brain's uncertain, the heart says yes
A final decision is required, more or less
No passport or I.D checks to be applied
And they'll be free to roam, once inside
But is this really love, I still have to guess
The topic about which one should obsess

Just then, did I detect a Cupid arrow hit
My heart missed a beat, but did not quit
But isn't it supposed to be instantaneous
Feelings being more than miscellaneous
Has my situation changed, if only a bit
When liking is not love and it doesn't fit

Perhaps in time, it can put down roots
I cannot ignore these springtime shoots
As now is the moment it decides to start

It runs in my veins, both head and heart
The equation of love, always computes
And will be victorious, whenever it suits

THE DRY

THE DRY

The dry sand billows up in the hot breeze
As if blindly searching for a place to stay
No respite under another day's baking sun
Other winds that blow, each have a name
Like Bora or Mistral, yet not seeking fame
But here in this arid desert there are none
All discrete identities are just blown away
By sunset, a welcome coolness by degrees

The pale sand is sculpted into a rolling dune
That's shifting its shape, assuming new poses
The curves and angles that almost never last
So few people know of these driest of places
It's often just a fantasy about seeing an oasis
The prospect of water like a spell that is cast
But such dryness is a curse that rain opposes
Treated with disdain by both sun and moon

ONE GOAL

ONE GOAL

There's more than one thing left for me to do
In life, a wide spectrum of stuff still to achieve
As time is ever shorter, I guess I must choose
Not just sitting in the dark, suffering the blues
With so much yet to discover, or even believe
Of all the goals I seek I know one is really true

My horizons require I take a short term view
If indeed time permits, but that is merely fate
But I still have far to go, as a Thursday's child
I pace myself, and am certainly no longer wild
But when my goal is in plain sight, it's like bait
I will not accept safety and comfort just in lieu

My goal to defy death, at least a few more years
A measured approach to living, nothing stupid
My poetic aim is to complete six thousand works
While somewhere inside some creativity still lurks
And even once again to feel the arrow of Cupid
Never to recognise when it's the sum of all fears

FIRSTBORN

FIRSTBORN

It was probably purest chance
When the first poem was born
The words spoken or even sung
And in the still air they hung
A rhythm like the waving corn
That almost seemed to dance

To bosoms words were clasped
Newly born, soon for weening
Consonance causing a surprise
One could see it in their eyes
Realising the greater meaning
As understanding was grasped

Written verse was widely shared
Populating the world and minds
Realising that poetry had grown
And captured on tablets of stone
Evolving newer forms and kinds
See how that firstborn has fared

KERNEL OF HOPE

KERNEL OF HOPE

Under that hard shell of desperation
And broken promises of satisfaction
Moving on, even by only a fraction
Some soft flesh with a sweeter taste
With a hint of hope it may be laced
But in the kernel the answer's found

Here, one can finally discover hope
And fall no further down that slope
A new strength with which to cope
To take on all doubts and then win
From this seed a new life can begin
And no longer hiding underground

Such a resolution might come late
The plan to emerge and germinate
Benefits are always worth the wait
Bursting forth with a steely resolve
Seeing the new capabilities evolve
Fully recovered and finally crowned

THE DAY THAT ANGER DIED

THE DAY THAT ANGER DIED

It was finally over, peace restored
All dictatorial threats now ignored
Even those who fell on their sword
And other blades soon to sheathe
At last, a chance again to breathe
I do recall the day that anger died

Hope, that had been buried so long
Now it was the people's joyful song
And even learning right from wrong
Seeing the reminders of bloody war
With many memories painfully raw
But was still the day that anger died

Blood first ran hot then quite cold
Their duty to protect, not for gold
The bitter taste of lies all were sold
Now, remember in relative silence
All loved ones lost, in the violence
Yet finally, the day that anger died

WHEN TIME STOPS

WHEN TIME STOPS

That moment, as the curtain is pulled aside
Suddenly, everything goes into slow motion
Time, and it seems even the planet, stops
And the realisation when the penny drops
As the mind entertains the strangest notion
The last vestiges of reality have finally died

It is a state where nothing can stay at rest
Everything that is odd now struts and poses
All we once knew is assuming a new identity
Like a thick mist and a comfortable intensity
Fantasy now let loose whilst cold logic dozes
A calling of the wild by beating one's breast

We feel the collapse of the fourth dimension
Time has stopped, and confusion now reigns
Who thought an instant had so much to see
An image of what was before, and was to be
Yet in this thinnest of cracks, hope remains
An incantation needed to break the tension

There's a slim chance that time may resume
And all can be back on its track once again
Perhaps faith is a factor, believing it's right
But whether this is temporary or permanent
We can look up to wonder at the firmament
Each star in the sky, a tiny pinprick of light
Like a single lit candle in a darkened room

A STILL MOMENT

A STILL MOMENT

In the midst of cacophony and noise
When all around, are voices shouting
A pure single note penetrates the air
Yet gradually all are silent and aware
Even those who may still be doubting
And with their clear lack of any poise

Then the note becomes more complex
As it evolves into an augmented chord
An added bass line sounds like thunder
To make so many jaws drop in wonder
The crowd, still silent, remaining awed
Few had ever experienced such effects

Strange glances reflect some confusion
All move apart like a group of islands
As the people share a strange reaction
Such sounds, a cause of dissatisfaction
But once again, it resolves into silence
Moving rapidly to a quiet conclusion

ROMANCE

ROMANCE

Should I ever fear that romance may die
And find my soul of new found love, bereft
I shall resist as hard as I can try
And erase all thought of what may be left

Romance is not a fantasy, but real
Not the grim and grey days of loneliness
But with certain intent my heart to steal
And changing one's whole life I must confess

Such emotion I'd welcome anytime
To know that romance is alive and well
As even the silent moments can rhyme
And then to last, as far as I can tell

For romance, all my life I've always strived
And yet for me, the time's not yet arrived

BOYS TOYS

BOYS TOYS

Here is another early recollection
It was Christmas, upon reflection
Windows with frost on the inside
A winter freeze that none denied
A cold morning, no more waiting
The night before, just anticipating

Three toy cars, other presents too
Nash Rambler, a pretty light blue
Hudson Sedan, brown and cream
Usually two-toned, it would seem
Plymouth Plaza, in a purple shade
American makes, yet British made

Best of all, was a construction set
The nicest present one could get
In a box, alongside those toy cars
And it had nuts and bolts in brass
Soon, I had something assembled
Yet only I knew what it resembled

Back then, so glad for what I'd got
Money was tight, so it wasn't a lot
Yet somehow we all came through
Slowly, things improved, it is true
But today, with all this reminiscing
I do recall those things I'm missing

DEMONS IN DAYLIGHT

DEMONS IN DAYLIGHT

Up until now, they always hid from view
But then appeared whenever called upon
Taking all that was perceived as their due
Leaving us bereft, as if all hope had gone

But no longer just denizens of the night
With no shame, they're here in the day
No longer being frightened by the light
Chuckling and sneering as if now at play

The first time they've been clearly seen
Disfigured, as if one could even feel pity
The pain they bring is a disgusting scene
Like rats, now more common in the city

They are but evil minions and low grade
But still they will haunt almost everyone
Always with their widest grins displayed
We are facing a danger of being overrun

We can only apply the poisons at hand
Love and respect, with warning so stark
But it's something they can't understand
And rid these demons, back to the dark

AFRICAN DESTINY

AFRICAN DESTINY

It's like offering a rabid dog a biscuit
Somehow, I don't think I shall risk it
It might be time to make a hasty exit
Why show sympathy for wild animals
I've heard that some can be cannibals
So, I will make a strategic withdrawal

Who'd have thought I'd meet a hyena
My partner's missing, I've not seen her
And in my search, I couldn't be keener
Out here in the bush it can't be worse
Fearing some infection without a nurse
But now it's late, getting near nightfall

We drove way out here without a guide
Air conditioned jeep and so hot outside
Yet the Serengeti stretches far and wide
No phone signal and we are out of fuel
To be stranded like this could be cruel
So unlikely to be any hope of help at all

But she insisted back there, was a shack
And was perhaps just a mile or so, back
I said she must always keep on this track
I stayed just in case another car came by
But then followed her, I don't know why
No-one in view, nor any reply to my call

I guess both of us are now lost and alone
And still with no reception on my phone
We'll both be found, gnawed to the bone

Especially now more hyenas surround me
Hearing them laugh at my own stupidity
I ran and then fell, now I can only crawl

ODE TO THE MOTHER LODE

ODE TO THE MOTHER LODE

For years, just chipping away in the dark
And lit by just a modest lamp at my side
At first, the prospects were really quite stark
Alone and in winter, I sat down here and cried
But then there was something that pushed me on
A tiny glint of gold I knew was there
I'll soon be rich, and now no longer a hope
Despair has now gone
Was this the mother lode of which I am aware
My emotions always were a slippery slope

Ah, now I have at last exposed the seam
It glitters, despite how crushed it is by rock
To find it after so much time, my dream
Yet even now it proved to be a shock
A scrape or two and then it will be mine
The search for gold was ever a life mission
A recompense for all these years below
Perhaps it is a sign
To realise the cash with no contrition
And in the sun to see that golden glow

RESIDENCY

RESIDENCY

A feeling that seems to linger forever
As if a reminder, dwelling deep within
Always there as a permanent presence
In darkness, without any luminescence
If it had a face it would be an evil grin
Like twisted cable, impossible to sever

I am haunted by this, a lurking spectre
And by it, I shall evermore be blighted
Although this was not always the case
It's an event and a time I cannot place
Ever since it took residence, uninvited
It entered me, carried by some vector

I fear that it is a dominating influence
As it affects my ongoing state of mind
My own thinking, likely now impaired
Soon, all my identity will be ensnared
With no prospect of relief of any kind
And I detect it growing in intelligence

An unwelcome option may be surgery
Yet I guess it knows just where to hide
So, perhaps something to tempt it out
To suggest its future's here, is in doubt
And then as soon as it emerges outside
Trap it quickly and inflict serious injury

I had never heard of such things before
Except in tales of juju obeah or voodoo
Was it that cursed holiday I did last year

And had no protection it would appear
Yet even now I can't believe that's true
But trips to darkest jungles, nevermore

THE NATURE OF REALITY

THE NATURE OF REALITY

We all, or at least most of us, knew
Or just believed, that reality was real
With quantum theory dispelling it all
Like some engine that's prone to stall
With less known, more one may feel
Different perspectives on an old view

Quantum stuff is in its tiny dimension
Not quite the physics taught long ago
New mindset needed for an odd affair
As binary states do belong somewhere
Yet still with something that will flow
Now more is brought to our attention

Trying to comprehend the subatomic
And explaining it all is an awkward task
To understand it and yet still keep sane
As it seems to be a worm in the brain
But what really is reality, one may ask
As it feels more like a kid's 60s comic