

FORTHRIGHT



**FRANK
MCMAHON**

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MP

I need at least three other jobs.

67 grand a year, barely surviving.

In my constituency industry's no longer thriving,

But I need this perfunctory remuneration

Given all I do for the nation.

Odd Socks

In the days of Enoch Powell
They were seen as odd socks,
different colours,
Didn't go together.

Today, despite the best efforts of UKIP,
They're now accepted,
As differing colours that enhance
The outfit.
They go together.

Orange

I'd like to say that the only orange
In Northern Ireland
Is the colour of a Sainsbury's bag.
I'd like to say that

Americanisms

I don't think it's awesome
When I manage to pay for a coffee.

When asked the internationally meaningless
question

"How are you?"

I say "fine thanks" not "I'm good"

I'm not being asked about my perception

Of my moral being.

I don't want to be rude, dude

But spare me the Americanisms.

America

I've reservations about a nation
Built on genocide,
The Native Americans seen as an early Al Qaeda
With bows and arrows their weapons
Of mass destruction.

Your insurance health system
Gives me no reassurance,
A Wall Mart plastic bag
That's likely to break
Half way through the journey.
I'm glad I've got the sturdy hold all
Of the NHS,
But that smacks of socialism.

Still, you gave us country, blues, jazz, rock n roll -
And Elvis.

Acceleration Nation

We've become an acceleration nation.
Not the speed of Coe or Overtt
On the home strait,
Or accelerated social mobility,
But the lack of nobility
Of aging boy racers.
A nation too hard on the throttle
And too quick on the bottle

Politically Correct

I don't want to be PC.

It's just not me.

Don't get me wrong, it's good

That it's taboo

To be openly prejudiced

But if people are not thinking anew

Then they are still carrying their thoughts,

Knives stashed away when inspected,

And all those they've never respected,

They still don't.

Those thoughts are racist tattoos

Hidden away

Beneath a bomber jacket,

But not removed.

Those blades are unsheathed

When there's no-one around,

Ready to stab,

Ready for blood.

The prejudice is no longer blatant,

Just latent, a blade hidden in a jacket.

The hate is still sometimes released

On the seats where they used to stand.

But most say nothing through fear of being banned.

Imagine instead,

They applaud each player regardless -

Where if he's gay

They don't think any less of him;

Or, if the assistant ref has got breasts,

They no longer care.

Polished Boots

The government want kids to learn more
Than to just pass exams,
But they want to bring the army in to schools,
To teach them about life.

But they will only learn the discipline
Of polishing their boots
And making an impeccable bed,
And then having to lie on it.
There won't be a chance to spend time
In someone else's shoes -
That's just too *To Kill A Mockingbird*.
They will learn to follow orders,
To salute the brute Sergeant,
A sports teacher in khaki.

They will learn not to cry
Unless slicing onions;
To not have opinions ,
Just to be one of many minions,
Because they didn't go the right school.
Sergeant Sarky will reinforce hierarchy.
No chance of learning emotional intelligence,
Just military intelligence.
Targeting those on the dole,
Promising them a role.

Father Christmas Should Be Green

Let Father Christmas dress in green, not red.
Discard the colours of Coca Cola,
A drink that's carbonated, sugary,
And return to those of nature's common treasury,
Abundant, fragile.

Return to the spirit of St Nicholas,
Not that of X boxes, flat screens and Adidas.

Monday Morning on the Bus to Work

You're running,
But not to get your serotonin levels up,
Just to catch the bus,
One of the single deckers that Nottingham City Transport
Seem to specialise in,
in the morning rush hour.

You just about make it,
But have to stand up.
You always have to.
You look around: catch the expressions
Of nearby passengers, distant,
Their eyes all brightness gone
Like buses with a "sorry, out of service" sign
With its empty darkness,
As if they were on their way to the electric chair
Or the dentist's, at least.

But soon you will be on the Friday night double decker,
With people's expressions, numbers stating their destination,
You're waiting for the right person to get on board.

The Pharmaceutical Companies Say:

"They're old timers,
Bound to get Alzheimer's.
There's no profit
In the old and decrepit."

Does Your Boyfriend know You're Here (Wolves v Brighton December 20th 2014)

Shouts of "Can you hear the fairies sing?"
Or "Does your boyfriend know you're here?"
At the Brighton away fans
Could be seen as just football wit,
Santa banter,
Finding any perceived weakness,
Or they may be strongly held beliefs.

The fairies are not just on top of the Christmas tree.
There will be statistically at least a couple
On the pitch and hidden couples in the crowd.
Maybe it's the no nonsense centre half,
Who is into high energy on the pitch
But not on the dance floor,
Or the enforcer midfield general
Who can tackle that tricky winger
But does not want to tackle
That much trickier abuse,
that led Justin Fashanu to the noose.

To Have and To Have Not

When I told you I had some debt
You gave me a reply Marie Antoinette
Would be proud of.
"You're always drinking beer and getting taxis"
I'm actually quite frugal
And don't even eat much cake.

You were able to buy a house outright,
No mortgage fight
For you.
When you needed money
You didn't think of looking for a job,
But bought another house, a buy for let.
You've never had to struggle and strive to survive,
At any time since you've been alive.

Wolverhampton Sunday Night

There's almost nobody on the streets,
As if it were a town in a Western,
everyone cowering inside,
the gunfighters prepared to draw,
Except there were no gunfighters,
Although in the distance
I could hear the Sheriff's sirens.
The saloons were empty or closed.

Jobs massacred
As if they were Native Americans.
There's now a small reservation of industry
In the former Black Country.

The Specials played the night before,
In the Civic Hall.
At least there were people there,
Although it looked like all the trading posts
had been closed down.
Becoming like a ghost town.

In the Dark

The city's motto is Out of Darkness Cometh Light
But they can't afford to light up St Peter's at night.

Suddenly medieval and gothic on the hill,
Its oldest, grandest building, lies in the dark.
At night, you'd not notice it was there.
Although the litter has suitable spotlights.
Perhaps the council just don't care
I'm in the dark about why they don't.

The Brutalists

The town that until the 1960's
Kept all of its teeth,
Each one a building, Victorian or Edwardian,
A church or a factory,
But all of this was seen as decay,
And the brutalists, medieval dentists,
Ripped them out.
And so the town was left
A gummy emptiness,
All facial structure gone.

Endangered

The brutalists saw it as healthy,
Cutting the flab
Of those outmoded buildings,
With their Victorian detail,
But replaced them with drab.

The Low Level Station, disused
For decades, Persian cat blue brick,
Victorian, endangered
The old Post Office, long disused,
Red squirrel coloured bricks, endangered.
Contents worth having
Should not get a cardboard box.
They should get a treasure chest
or a Japanned box at least.

You Wanted to Change their Views

You wanted to change their views,
Thought them irrational, ignorant, prejudiced,
But your arguments, however well thought out,
Fell like snow, large flakes,
On wet ground. They would not settle.
But when their experience changed,
Your snow began to settle.
On their now dry ground.

Maybe a snowy epiphany for them.

Not A Suburb

You didn't want to be a twenty something charm
on his arm.

Defined by men,
Never someone, always the girlfriend of ...
like a town that gets swallowed up
By its bigger neighbour
seen as a suburb
With all the signs saying "5 miles to ..."

You have your own geography,
Your own history,
Separate from, different.

He Treated Her With Derision

He treated her with derision
Because she sometimes watched television.
She had a good degree
But chose to occasionally watch TV.
He said she was dumbing down
And getting boring.
He, conversely, was constantly poring
Over books, usually arcane
Expanding his brain,
Becoming more interesting by the day.
He talked at length
About his absurdist play,
To anyone who would listen.
She worked nine to five.
He sat waiting for inspiration to arrive,
A full time writer.

Appearing avant garde
Wasn't hard.

Passenger

He mainly talks about his cock
And the pair of knockers at three o'clock,
Who are obviously staring at him.
Talks about cars, sport and himself.

In his company you're a passenger
In the gas guzzler he drives
On every social occasion.

Bottled Beer Boneheads

In the real ale pub,
They all drank bottled lager,
All gas, air and fizz.
They were a bit laddish,
A bit baddish,
A bit saddish.

They were within my line of sight.
They didn't seem quite right.
I made sure I didn't stare.
Fortunately they were still half sober
But they were itching for ..
They'd not had a fight since October.
Spring was in the air
But with no spring in their steps.

They patrolled the bar,
Not waiting to be served
As if it were a border
Needing to be protected,
And I was an illegal alien.

They soon left
For manors new,
And to dab their shirts
With a kebab.

Minimum Wage Blues

He's a Tory, who disagrees with the minimum wage,
It's far too high
Guess how much his staff are paid?
You can't get free water at the bar,
The only such pub near and far.
He plays some songs at the end of the open mic,
It's a good way of clearing the bar after last orders I suppose,
Or to sink into a post beer doze.
His guitar playing is lumpen,
Concrete hands strumming,
And his singing is grey.
Prior to that you've had a good night
But overall he's negative dynamite.

Highbrow

He's the sort of literary fella
That bristles when he sees
"international best seller."
He prefers more literary fiction
With the prerequisite diction.
His exacting standards seem to cause friction
With his more populist low brow friends.
He doesn't know why
He wonders why he rarely sees them anymore.

Destined For Lateness

You were destined for lateness.
The bus driver didn't stop for you.
You don't know why.
Another bus passed you by. It was full,
On a Tuesday afternoon.
Your train was late.
There were leaves on the track.

Chugger in WH Smith

I was not used to them being inside,
Crossing the threshold.
Had someone asked them in?
One of a smarmy army,
He made a guess at my profession:
"Are you a doctor?"
I replied that I was not.
Although I diagnosed obsequiousness.
I still ending up paying
For the charity, as it seemed worthwhile,
Despite his smarmy smile.

Aren't You Ashamed?

"Aren't you ashamed?"
I was asked when I told her
I was from Wolverhampton.
An erstwhile Catholic,
I was used to the din
Of original sin,
But not the secular version.
"Aren't you ashamed?"
Blamed for what I don't control.
No I'm not.

Gig

When I was younger I'd try and get to the front at gigs
But there were always blokes
redwood tree tall
In front of me.

I could see all.

Hit Single

Of course, they're very good looking.
A real hit single,
Makes your senses tingle.
The catchiness draws you in,
Their body a hook,
But after a few spins
You realise there's nothing.

You've ignored the long player,
Its charms only revealed
After repeated listens.
If you'd only persevere,
Minor and major chords, harmonies,
All of it you'd hear.

You Won't Get that On Download

There will never be an ode to the download.
Some at least still want the album
With its welcoming gatefold sleeve,
Inviting you inside, into its world.
You won't get that on download.

The album would not be complete
Without a lyric sheet,
Not to be read while listening to the beat.
You won't get that on download.

The planned sequencing of songs
In a particular order,
You won't get that on download.

I'm a lover of the album cover
From the minimalist White Album
To Roger Dean and everything in between.
You won't get that on download.

You Don't Lead A Marmite Life

You don't lead a Marmite life.
When you look back
At what you've done
And where you've been
Will you be content
To be agreeably, uncontroversially margarine,
Spreadable, edible
(But not on its own,)
Healthy but unmemorable?

It's sometimes better to stand out,
Reveal what you feel.
Take a chance on being either:
Appalling sticky black stuff
Or a salty delight
you can't get enough of.

Lennon

You were not a universal truth bringer.
Just a great songwriter,
a great singer.
A jealous guy at times
Who sometimes needed help.
Told the truth and made it rhyme.

Guilty Pleasure

I've got a guilty pleasure
It's not a zest for the murders of Fred West,
But to do with my musical leisure.

I bought Piledriver for a fiver,
Front cover: three heads down long hair covering faces
It's not just all formula
Listen to Gerundula,
Almost Eastern sounding.
A less trendy AC/DC
Too far gone for the ironic Tee.
Originally a frantic four, pre 76,
Then the guitars went down in the mix.
South London boys who made a lot of boogie noise,
Then went soft rockin all over the world.

Shane McGowan as Fitness Fanatic

I had a dream about Shane McGowan.
He no longer said "Pogue Mahone"
Was suddenly into muscle tone,
daily crunches,
No more liquid lunches.
No more heroin and Catholic sin.
Too busy in the gym.
Had a new set of teeth,
But there seemed to be nothing left beneath.
No more A Pair of Brown Eyes
His songs seemed suddenly toothless.

Talk on Shane McGowan

The academic talked a lot about Shane's teeth
Or lack of, but not much about what lies beneath.
Why does McGowan continue
To bathe in streams of whisky the size of the Shannon?
How does he continue?

I asked why Shane had not written much of note
Since 1985
Why don't new songs arrive?
The reply about a lack of financial incentive
Didn't ring true. *Shane, give us something new.*
Have you lost your powers through too many Powers?

Like A Bullet From a Gun

“Like a bullet from a gun”
Was how Ted Lowe
Described the pot.
He liked players to be slow,
With a bow tie,
Functional, punctual.

“like a bullet”
would have said enough.
The pot shot into the pocket
Before you could get as far as “like”.
The Hurricane had learned precision.
Lowe had not learned concision.

Whole Lotta Snowman (School's Out)

Snow on the ground.
Not a white Christmas
But something much better,
A white January,
Equivalent of a letter from my mom
That I was too ill to attend today
Or that I could not do sports,
Not even cross country.

A carrot and buttons for eyes no longer appealed.
At fourteen I'd long grown past
The allure of a snowman.
I'd maybe put on some shorts, blazer and a cap
And pretend he was Angus Young.
He'd be a whole lotta snowman.

School was out, not for summer,
And not for ever
But for a day at least.
The snow was cool
Because it meant no school.
A white, sadly temporary hill
That meant cars and buses were still
In their houses and garages
And I could stay at home,
Or could be free to roam,
In my denim and leather.
No blazer that day.

Fretting

At eleven I couldn't swim,
And the sport teacher told me not to fret,
As I stood nervously on the edge of the pool.

Years later I fretted before going on stage
To play guitar to an audience for the first time,
Three songs in an open mic.
I was away from the shallow end
Of band practices.

Now I don't really worry,
And frets are just bars on my guitar neck.

Visiting the Dentist As A Kid

As a kid, dentists were villains,
Second only to sports teachers,
The Olympic gold medallists in bullying.

Once I bit the dentist's thumb,
Maybe because
He would not make me numb.

January Afternoon Run

Run, run
Before the sun is gone
Race, race
Against the dying of the light,
A small window of time, castle slit narrow,
Just wide enough to fit an arrow.

Run, run
Catch the sun,
Falling fast,
Before it drops away.

25 and 44

The young bloke
Told me he'd soon be twenty five.
He was still waiting for life to arrive,
As if it were a Valentine's card
From an unknown admirer,
Or a job offer dropping
Through his letter box,
Even though he had not applied.

At forty four I could have done more
But I also could have done less.
I never mentioned my age,
Although he'd never asked.

Imagine You're A diary

Imagine you're a diary:
By your early forties,
The spine is broken,
The pages dog-eared
And cluttered with paper,
Giving it middle aged spread.

By June you are falling apart,
But there's still six months to go.

At eighteen you were pristine,
Pages flat, clean, uncluttered
By mistakes and experience.

On Your Deathbed (It Was Fine)

On your deathbed,
When you look back on your life,
Will you say it was fine,
Fine as in a fine wine
Or a fine figure of a man or woman,
Or fine as in an arrangement
That was adequate, passable, satisfactory?

Good Innings

It doesn't matter if they made a good innings,
Their loss will still hit you,
A cricket ball in the face.
There's no helmet of protection.

Indian Summer (Enjoy Yourself)

You're getting older
But you feel and look good.
You're in your Indian summer.
Take advantage of the September and October sunlight,
Go with what feels right.
Enjoy yourself
It's later than you think.

You're getting older
And you don't want to be in December
Wishing you were bolder.

Others your age are out in the wind and cold,
Jealous, envious,
They see you as unseasonable.
In their envy they're unreasonable.

Busy Washing My Hair

You wanted to be in contact again,
For a coffee.
I replied that I was busy over the next few weeks.
Busy washing my hair,
Even though I've a crew cut and I'm balding.

I'm not wasting any more time with anger,
Although you played a large part
In making my few hairs turn grey.

Incompatible

I liked a drink
You did not.
You thought I was Liam Gallagher
Or maybe Oliver Reed
But you acted like a nun.
That's why I decided to run.

Last Chance Saloon

You felt you were in the last chance saloon,
No other opportunities would arise any time soon.
You told her how quick you were on the draw,
A man of the world, all the things you saw.
You could have shot your way out of the Alamo
You're on first name terms with so and so.
You told her how you'd been both sheriff and outlaw
But you had one fatal flaw.
You were all mouth and no ears.

You Did Not Need Her (The Sugar in Your Cereal)

Like sugar in your cereal
You did not need her.
She was causing you to decay.
You did not see it day to day.
But slowly, underneath,
She would have worn you away,
Until you become a set of crumbling teeth

Stupid With Cupid

I remember almost wanting to cry,
Quite a few decisions gone badly awry.
The cause: me being stupid with Cupid.
If love is a drug it's Ecstasy,
The high, then the inevitable comedown.

Did things I would not normally do
That I knew I'd one day rue.
Felt for a while like Romeo
But ended up more like Malvolio.

We often don't just fall in love
We collapse, too many blind mishaps.

If I Ran Into You while Running

If I ran into you while running,
At least I could give you a good reason
Why my heart was beating so fast.
I might still be embarrassed
About being red faced and sweaty
And suddenly conscious
Of the purely functional nature
Of my running gear.

Soon, Soon (Waiting)

I thought, the arrival of the next romance,
Would take as long as the next sighting
Of Haley's comet,
Seventy six years
Unless I migrate.
Too long to wait.
I was putting too much pressure on myself to deliver.
That accounted for my nervous shiver.

Now, I think future romance will arrive,
If not as quickly as each full moon,
Then soon, soon.

No Reply

You spend most of your time on your phone,
Even when you're not alone.
You've become attached to your mobile
You've not been free of it for a while.

I sent you a text.
But got no reply.
Perhaps you were busy
And had not had time to check your messages.

He is the Moon

He is the moon
He charms you with his light
For a few nights
Then he's gone,
Orbits someone else.
He comes and goes,
Never stays.

You were the tide,
Just a reflex to him.

You only saw his bright side.
He has light

Audition

Don't treat dates as auditions,
Where you want to impress,
Perform, recite the right lines
Or sing the melody just right
But thinking *I'll be glad when it's over.*

She's not with a notebook,
Saying "thanks, I'll let you know. Next"
Enjoy your performance,
But be attentive to hers.

It's not an examination viva.
You don't need to boast
About being a high achiever.
You're only competing against yourself.
When you meet her.

Marathons

I used to associate marathons
With the old and better name
For Snickers, as Opal Fruits are to Starbursts
But the worst was I didn't even realise
You need separate running shoes
And not just any old pair of trainers.

Running helps to beat the blues.
Now I can see things to look forward to,
Water points in the marathon of life.

Liverpool Half marathon

We started in the rain at the Three Graces,
Not yet any red faces.
I did it for charity
But also did it for me.
I no longer think endorphins
Are cute endangered marine mammals.
Otterspool Park, speed limit 5 miles per hour.
We were all breaking it.

The course was mainly flat
But the atmosphere was not.

We finished in the rain at the Three Graces
A few more red faces,
The colour of the Kop.
But we no longer noticed the rain.

The Grudge

The grudge would not budge.
I shouldered the boulder
With all its jagged edges
Up the sharp incline
Now I've decided to let it go.
I feel fine.

My name is not Sisyphus.

Criticism

Now I have learned to be slightly thicker skinned,
You can push me by being firmer in your critique.
You distinguish between the diamonds of well crafted
Metaphors and lines,
And the glass substitutes of lazy cliché,
Or where the emotion does quite not ring true.
Although I am not diamond hard,
(And probably never will be)
When I get constructive criticism
I am no longer glass fragile.
It helps that I've been writing for a while.

You are gentler on newer poets,
Who may be more brittle
And have only shared their work a little.

Sensitive

You wanted to see what was beneath
The laddish exterior.
He had sensitive teeth.

Thumbs Down

It's good to be optimistic,
One of those glass half full people,
(But prepare to be disappointed)
But your McCartney thumbs up demeanour
Begins to grate.
Most of us are trying to fix a hole
And life's not necessarily getting better all the time.

Optimists Are Often Disappointed

If the security into the ground
Was more like airport security,
They would have checked my wallet
And seen the Citalopram tablets.
“What are they sir?”
“They’re antidepressants”

“You’ll need that to watch the Wolves,
Especially when the match ends”.
This slightly punctured my naïve optimism.

On the pitch, one of our midfielders in black and gold,
Seemed almost like a Duracell battery,
Indefatigable but weak in the tackle,
Weak in the shot.
All the others were flat.
Disappointment was all that I got.

Bi Polar

They said you hadn’t been volatile for a while.
The Lithium was working.

At the whim of the moon
You were a boat upon the ocean
And when the tides were storm high
You thought yourself an ocean liner,
Nothing finer.

At other times when the waters were listless,
You became a raft,
Bereft,
adrift.

After the Setback

After the setback
I was going down
Slippery steep steps in the dark,
Without a rail or a bannister.

But you were a torch
And a guiding hand,
Until I was able to adjust
To the lack of light
And safely reach the bottom.

Uninspired

I was feeling tired, uninspired.
What I came up with was worse
Than Father Ted's My Lovely Horse.
It didn't help that Oasis was in the background,
Rhyming doctor and helicopter
Would be plagiarism and bad and sad.

Inspiration is usually a bus that comes regularly
But today it says 'sorry not in service'.
Maybe it's because I can't write to order.
This frustration will lead me to murder,
Words at least.

Inspiration

The cat lies fat and flat.
I'm waiting for him
To spring to life,
A fluffy ginger coiled spring,
But he doesn't,
As he's a toy, an inert thing.

Waiting for inspiration
Seems as futile
As waiting for that cat to move.

Nine Lives

The cat lies fat and flat.
He is lively.
He has nine lives
I only have one.
He always lands on his feet.
If I fell, plummeting,
I wouldn't look so neat.

Ironing

We can iron out the creases
Of our shirts and skirts,
But can't erase laughter lines
From our faces.

Even with poor technique
We can iron shirt creases
But not the wrinkles that make us
unique.

House Of Brick (This Little Piggy)

My self-worth was a house of straw
But the counselling, running and Citalpram,
Has made it a house of brick.
The big bad wolf of negativity
Can no longer blow my house down.
This little piggy lies safer.

In the NHS Mental Health Trust Library.

In the NHS mental health trust library
There were no registered first aiders,
Not according to the sign at least.
Instead of names it just said "library".

While the library may not be able to do chest compressions,
Maybe the books there can help with depression,
Provide emotional life support
To those choking on life,
Defibrillating heavy hearts.

Snow and Black Ice

Before the film
It was featureless, cold and dour.
I came out of the cinema,
Suddenly there was snow
As beautiful as a femme fatale
In a film noir.

The black ice had not formed yet,
But it would.

Derby v Wolves

I was looking for a pub with Sky.
I settled on the Billy Wright,
Named after a Wolves Great, 100 England Caps.
Sky was the limit
As we are usually rubbish on TV
And so we were,
Quickly dragged down to earth.

For at least one of their five goals,
Their player had enough time
To tie his shoe laces
Or maybe make a strong cup of tea
Before shooting.
Their defenders closed us down
Quicker than a Wolves city centre shop gets closed down.

Half the pub turned
To the Liverpool Chelsea game
On a couple of the TV screens.
The only animation from the Billy Wright
Coming from the Liverpool fans.
The Wolves gave up without a fight.

Darkness and Light

I watched the Wolves succumb,
Felt familiarly numb.
The team gave up
Without a fight.
The old gold was hardly bold.

I tried to convince myself
That out of darkness cometh light,
But it didn't seem quite right.

No More Doormats, I Want Locks

I went into one of two Wolves megastores,
Half empty, this one at least.
I saw a Wolves door mat.
This seemed pertinent as recent opponents
Had walked over our defence
And the door to the goal was left wide open.

I then thought of the Wolves greats,
Bert Williams, goalkeeper,
Billy Wright, defence,
Both as secure as a Chubb lock.
Peter Knowles, on the wing
Fast as a world speed record breaking Sunbeam.
Teams full of engineering and industry.
They were Wolves teams worth fearing,
Who could blow down defences
As if they were straw houses.

This was before the days of sponsored kits,
The ironically titled *Good Year*
And present day *What House*
As today our defence is burgled in broad day light.

Saville Rowe

Saville and Rowe played
Like they were half cut,
Passes raggedly astray
Like an ill fitted suit.
They had to go,
They did not seem to suit the Wolves.

Dick and Sako on the other hand
Had the energy of African lions
And almost bought us more
Than a one-one draw.

Christmas

Forget about the ivy and the holly.
Let's try to be jolly
All the year round.
Let not the spirit of goodwill
Only be drunk at Christmas,
But mine's a Jameson's if you're buying.

Follow St Nicholas,
Coins to the poor,
Down their chimneys at night,
Self-effacing
Not look at me,
Not Facebook publicity -embracing.

We are ivy,
Needing to cling to something
Or rather someone
For support,
For ourselves to grow.

Get under the mistletoe
With someone you like and know.

Sharing a hug
Is better
Than a lonely' *humbug*. '

Nottingham's Buses Used to be Green

Wouldn't it be good
If Nottingham's buses were Robin Hood green
Or the green of Cloughie's jersey?
They used to be.

Now buses are different colours for different routes.
You could be waiting for the sky blue 45 to arrive,
Against a sky that's not always blue.
The red line sounds fine
But would you want to take the brown line?

Poem A day

If I tried writing a poem a day
It would be Frank by numbers,
As I tried to rouse inspiration from his slumbers.

Poetry Suck It and See

Poetry, why not suck it and see
You might find,
Despite those bad experiences at school,
That it may not be like sucking a lemon
But more like a sherbet lemon.

No more twee and afternoon tea.
And mumbling posh voices
As your interest is then tumbling.
We need Keats
But not done in a plummy voice,
Utterly unlike his Cockney one.
Shelley had the balls ripped off
His statue at Oxford
We're going to put them back on.
It's been rebranded as spoken word
Semantics are not for me.
I'll have poetry.

Try our free A6 magazine
Fit it into your pocket.
Let your imagination rocket.

About the author

I've been writing poems for about sixteen years. This is my fourth volume of poetry.

This book contains 79 poems (a few of which are set in the 80's but don't worry there's no space hoppers or Rubik's Cubes). The book costs £4 so that's just over five pence per poem, a lot cheaper than Faber and Faber (I don't have the right connections). All of the poems are short. If they were a person they'd be Ronnie Corbett or maybe Napoleon or possibly Prince.

There should not be too many obscure, esoteric references (It's not the Waste Land), but the internet is there to help if needed.

I'm a founder member of DIY Poets, a Nottingham based poetry collective the aims of which are to encourage more people to perform their poetry and get their words into print. It also wants to make poetry less of a minority sport. At the moment it's the croquet of the arts. DIY Poets want it be cricket at the very least. (There's more about DIY Poets in the advert below).

Hope you enjoy this, my forthright fourth volume.

DIY POETS

A Nottingham based poetry collective trying to rescue poetry from elitism and being ignored.

DIY Poets have monthly meetings upstairs at the Broadway bar, Broad Street, Nottingham city centre, 8pm on the first Wednesday of each month.

DIY Poets produce a free poetry magazine based in shops, bars and cafes throughout Nottingham city centre.

DIY Poets produce a quarterly night of spoken word and music at the Maze on 257 Mansfield Road, Nottingham NG1 3FT

For more information phone 07889 765917 or email: diypoets@yahoo.co.uk

Join us on Facebook

VISIT OUR WEBSITE @: www.diypoets.com

Review of Difficult Second Volume:

"What appears to be a flat back four of everyday prose is illuminated by bursts of free verse magic, placed all over the pages with pinpoint precision by a playmaker of modern poetry. Thatcher, racist humour and narcissism are tackled and exposed for what they are." **Left Lion magazine**