

WHISTLING IN THE WIND



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MUSICAL COMEDY

- Two Hours of Happiness* (in collaboration with Malcolm Knight)

WHISTLING IN THE WIND

**A collection of poetry
from 2019**

by

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**ASPEN
London, England**

Published by **ASPEN-London**
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First published 2020

ISBN13: 9798638315719

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Front cover illustration Charles E. Burchfield (1893-1967)
The East Wind, 1918

**This book is dedicated to
my family
with deepest love.**

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FOREWORD

The intention was to publish this collection of poetry written in 2019 during the first quarter of 2020.

Honouring the best laid plans of the Scottish bard, Covid-19 arrived to trivialise such an event, and delay publication until normality had been restored. Only you, dear reader, may know whether and when that had happened and whether or not it had preceded or followed my demise.

Part I
ENGLISH VERSE

I'M NOT DONE YET

Those friends who knew me years ago
before our ways diverged,
may recollect how tempered was my intellect
though rivalry emerged
whenever cricket bat or tennis racquet
were flourished in a hand
that nowadays
is more prone to dismember
a fine Chateaubriand.

Tennis alas is of the past
and there, I fear, must bide,
but other sports and pastimes
I can still perform with pride.

So please set out those winks
that I may tiddle.
Dust off those mallets,
balls and hoops,
I'm not one of your nincompoops
and need no Queen's flamingo to
win without a taradiddle.
Or we could turn to bingo.

Then there are those of intellect
who might like bridge or chess,
though possibly in retrospect
It's best to acquiesce.

Ludo, Trivial Pursuits
and even Snakes and Ladders
might yet provide a good excuse
to encourage my swaggers.

The choice alas is far too great
and though it seems too late
yet, dice in hand, I bid farewell
with hopes still unerased
and one finger upraised.

TIMELINE

There's another timeline
somewhere,
where people are mourning me;
where family and friends are living
their natural spans,
achieving all that was hoped for
but lost along the way
in my parallel universe.

DON'T REINVENT IT - PERFECT IT!

Better to repeat the excellence
of something from the past,
than create a new product that
simply will not last.

RAGE

Forgive me
the rage of youth,
the senseless
towering frenzy
of childish
interception.
the malignity
of immaturity
Now that I am
old enough.
Old enough to be dying
with dignity.

UNTITLED

Oh god, oh god, oh how it stings,
the memory of those tiny things.
The calm meanders in the park,
the fireflies briefly brightening the dark.

DENIAL

When that which once
did touch my heart
and left it
torn in shreds,
then sought
to reappear
and readdress
the trespass
it had wrought,
I first believed
the end had come
and nothing good
remained,
but common-sense
prevailed
and though
still pained
I took the path
of least
resistance,
half-shrugged
one shoulder;
half-filled
the bucket
of my vanished
dreams;
half-shrugged
the other
shoulder
and said
fuck it!

OBITER DICTUM

Each morning I awake.

Each morning I am aware
that I am the me that
went to bed last night.

The same me.

And I experience
a vast feeling
of disappointment.

I pray for the day
that I awake
and am
someone
else.

SANITY

I have always been mad.
It is a condition
I have learned
to live with.

Yesterday however
I had a moment
of pure sanity.

It terrified me.

DIVERSITY

The diversity of peoples in the world
is like the diversity of instruments in an orchestra;
they provide different sounds
but they produce the same music,
and by collaborating they
enhance it.

FELLOW PASSENGER

We met at Waterloo.

As it seemed we were bound
for the same destination
we travelled together.

But halfway there
I asked myself
“Who is he?”

And I feared
to ask him.

OUR DEEDS DEFINE US

I have spoken many cruel words
I have harboured many unkind thoughts
I have been guilty of many unconcerned feelings
and these are all shameful.

But, at the end of the day,
I am not defined by what I say;
I am not defined by what I think;
I am not defined by what I feel.

I am defined by what I do
and I have done nothing
for which I need to feel ashamed.
Thankfully, my deeds define me.

SHE WORE HER HEART ON HER SLEEVE

She wore her heart upon her sleeve
displayed, though vaguely risible,
with no intention to deceive,
her love spilled out naively visible.

The path was dark
hushed were the twitters of her beloved birds.
Silent dove and muted lark.

She wore her heart upon her sleeve,
and unheard were her dying words:
“I believe”.

UNTIL I DRAW MY FINAL BREATH

I try to draw an angel
drawing on the wall
with wings outstretched

drawing patterns on my chest.

painting the sun
in a trance
and drawing down the moon

I try to draw your face
from memory.

Until I draw my final breath
death
shibboleth of shirt
worn outside the pants

THE POWER OF POSITIVE THOUGHT

I believe in the power of positive thought.

I believe I can affect the future and that
the natural course of events is not immutable.

I reject the normalcy bias which assures me that
because it has never happened, it *can* never
happen. Sometimes life's greatest lessons come
from the most unanticipated experiences.

And yet,
and yet . . .

My favourite Scripture Ecclesiastes assures me
that what has happened before will happen again;
what has been done before will be done again; and
that there is nothing new in the whole world.
Resonance of the "history repeats itself" dictum
whose lessons Santayana warns us to ignore at our
peril.

Whereas my favourite history teacher "Tinny" Newman
had a more appropriate prescription:

"History does not repeat itself, historians do."

How do I reconcile these apparently conflicting beliefs?

[Silent screams]

It is a precious lesson to be learned.

And perhaps my belief that the power of my thought is sufficient to alter the course of my life is merely another example of the Ecclesiastes' "vanity of vanities, all is vanity".

[If there's a telekinetist in the house, will you please raise my hand]

At one time I could not recall experiencing anything that I had failed to envision and this had always enabled me to make due provision

for any nasty aftermath such as the problems involved in leaving a slippery bath.

Thus it was with an absence of concern that, having suffered a really bad fall, I immersed myself in a bath and then found I could not escape at all; and this stimulated me to reflect on other instances where prescience, or the lack of it, had failed to intersect.

How do I recover these memories?

[Knee jerk!]

It is a potential hazard.

Saddest of all is not what is or what might occur so much as what might have been.

What we do not realise, or are reluctant to
accept, is that we inhabit the world we deserve.
Returning, equally reluctantly, to my thesis, and
returning to Scripture, we are told that
one generation gives way to another
but earth abides, and I cannot decide
if this is a cause of regret or one of delight.

And when I am told
in wisdom there is grief
and that increasing knowledge
will also increase sorrow,
I'm tempted to set it all aside until tomorrow.

Okay. Oy veh!
I'll leave it for another day.

CONTEMPLATION

I arouse myself from joyful
slumber and contemplate the
assault on all my senses
that I know will aggravate me
as I anticipate

the odour of freshly chopped onion
that assails my nose, in
contradistinction
to the aroma of freshly mown grass
that elevates my soul.

When politicians speak their
lies my nostrils twitch, in
complete contrast
to a metaphysical debate
that enchants my essence.

I consider the “gherkin” in
London that degrades my sight, so
divergent from
the view of the Parthenon in
Greece that arouses my spirit.

And as I make the best of it,
I grit my teeth
and hold my nose
and settle back to contemplate
my inner peace and calm.

SEEK NOT MY SOUL

I have left something of my soul
in each place I have lived. And I
have lived
in many places.

What I ask myself now is:
how much of my soul
remains.
And where does it reside?

TAKE MY HAND

I am the difference that
shelters the difference;
I am the hope to
nourish the heart;
I am the truth that
lights up the darkness,
and causes all fear to depart.

,

THE LAST TRUMP

We laughed when we built castles in the sand.
We laughed through the tidal disarray.
We sang with joy when the new-born babe arrived
We sang with grief when she was borne away.

But who is laughing now that all is gone?
Who is singing the last song of all?

Whose is the last laugh?
Who plays the last trump?

TRANSMUTATIONS

To shake forbidden fruit
from off the sacred tree,
to quell the hungry yearnings
of the phantom bough
and hide the mystic longings
of the barren heart.
These are the secret wishes
that are keeping us apart.

A FIERY STORY

Once upon a time
we were proud.
We had beliefs
convictions
targets
and desires
that encompassed
more than our own
simple wants.

Indeed
we abhorred wants.
We embraced
needs.
The needs of others
as much as,
if not more
than our own.

Where have they gone?
Who is there now
to pick up the mantle?
To run with the pennant?
To proclaim
a universal
truth?

Who is there
in this day and age
to plant the seeds
of selflessness?
To demonstrate
humility
and love?

Where have they gone,
the exemplars
of yesteryear
whose actions
matched
their words?

Who will be left
to live
happily
ever
after?

WHISTLING IN THE WIND

I love the susurrations
of sibilant sounds.

The word “bliss”
is blissful.

The word “fuss”
is fascinating.

The word “stress”
is surprisingly soothing.

Tennyson has long enchanted me
with his sibilant Lotus Eaters.
His land of streams,
some like a downward smoke,
slow dropping veils . . .

His sweet music
that softer falls
than petals from blown roses . . .
and music that brings sweet sleep
down from the blissful skies.

I am enamoured
not with the sounds of silence
but with
the sounds of sibilance.

CATERWAULING

.
I wake still and far too often
with the all-too-slowly
but oh so evanescently
fading memory of her voice.

Ever since that odious event,
that heinous malevolent and
deafeningly persistent
drumming in my head

that disturbs my sleep
distracts my thoughts
and haunts the daymares
of my diminishing life.

The blaring, blasting bluster,
the eruption of molten viscous sound
that barks, yaps, yelps and yowls,
that sounds, resounds and reverberates.

How can I escape the cacophany
that threatens to enmesh me?
How can I return to the
tranquillity of a serene silence?

THE MYSTIQUE OF POETRY

Poetry is like
the stars one cannot see
in the daytime.
It is a sense of fright
in the night.
It is metrical
but does not need to be
symmetrical.
It is rhythmic
but does not need to
rhyme.
It is knowledge
that precedes sentience
but lags behind
sensitivity.
It is fuelled
by consternation
and damned by
flocculation.
It is ambiguity;
it is obscurity;
it is enigma.

THERE WE WERE

There we were
on the grass
legs threshing
and thrashing
fondling on the grass
stroking on the grass
hands searching
and seeking
and finding . . .

Stop it you fool
now you've scratched me!

Should have cut my nails,
should have been gentler.

DID SHE DIE FOR ME?

Our lives were always
so interconnected,
so entwined.

Despite her years
of pain
and suffering,
her concern
for my wellbeing
was always
evident.

Since her death
my own health
has
miraculously
improved.
I am fitter now
than I have been
for years.

This morning
I awoke
to the most absurd
thought:
did she die
that I might live?

I AM THERE

Don't tell me . . .
nothing
lasts forever.
I reject it.
And so far,
so good.

Don't ask me . . .
to escape
my situation
by moving
to another place.
I am already there.

Don't deny me . . .
my right
to grieve
For it is
my weapon
against anger.

Don't mock me . . .
and tell me
where
you think
I ought to go.
I am already there.

RAKING THE ASHES

Cast aside your Sigmund Freud,
it's something you cannot avoid;
to reach a time of dampening desires
and lessening of lifelong fires.

I AM NO PENITENT

I am no penitent.

I enjoy my impish
behaviour
too much.

I sometime feel
that in a previous life
I may have been Titivulus,
the incredible Michael Ayrton's
magnificent verbiage collector.

. . . the little devil.

FAITH WITHOUT REASON

Faith is belief without reason;
Reason is belief tempered by doubt.
Faith is instinctual.
Belief is cerebral.
The vast majority of people
Prefer faith to reason.
Our choice of leaders
Bears witness
to this assertion.

ON CONSIDERING CURRENT WORLD LEADERS

Oh, where has that god gone?
Oh, what has that god done?
How shall we live alone
that once depended on
a heavenly father who defended
us and now is made superfluous?

Oh, where has that god gone?
Oh, what has that god done?
What can replace that
heavenly grace? Can ear or
hand or eye supplant its
mirthless majesty?

Perhaps it's not that god has
gone but rather god has been
replaced by many other gods.
Unholy gods, ungodly sods, who
offer no exemption
from time-past sin's redemption,

but just provide a shining light
to illumine a fearful night,
colonized by miscreants and
similar recipients;
and what remains in that confusion
is nothing but a vast illusion.

There is no plan, there is no haven
to escape from images engraven.
The trumpet that was played by
god is merely a connecting rod to
nothing but a shooting star
a sound drowned by Satan's guitar.

So often the god that we thought
great is breeder of no more than hate.
We see them in all walks of life with
gordian knots that lack a knife, or
weavers of a nautical shroud
more shocking than a mushroom cloud.

I would choose to have it gone
that secular phenomenon,
that we might build trust up again
far from the place where corpses
reign, to somewhere safe for everyone.
And now I vow my verse is done.

I CAN DO BETTER

There was a time
when words appeared
mysteriously, magically
magnificently
upon the previously blank page.

And then came
a period of total
dissatisfaction.

I would read them once . . .
and then again.
And suddenly
involuntarily
they would cease
to make sense.

I would say to myself
“I can do better”.
And then –
“Better than what?”

THE PATHS MOST TRAVELLED

The mistakes we make and
then occasionally the paths we
take, as we attempt to reach the
topmost pinnacles
of long sought for success,
may be nothing more than the sad contrail
that precedes our choice of a crooked
trail. And we may frequently end up
unable to achieve those sought for graces.

Sometimes we make the wrong
choices to get to the right places.

WHAT PRICE OPTIMISM?

Many years ago
I had a dream.
I believed in innate goodness
and considered myself
an optimist.

Alas for Nature's
nasty habit
of bringing one
face to face with
reality.

In sport
the arts
and politics . . .
Indeed
in every aspect
and area of my
existence
idols crumbled;
beliefs disintegrated;
hopes evaporated.

And now that dream is gone.

THE GUIDING VOICE

I heard a voice within my head;
its tones sweetly mellifluous.
It filled me with such melancholy
as rendered speech superfluous.

Thus does my mind becalm my mood.
The angry prejudice disperses
all that lies misunderstood
and lets my brain construct its verses.

A TREASURE CHEST OF MEMORIES

I'll make myself a treasure
chest and in it I shall place
all those precious memories
that time may not efface
the sights and sounds and sentiments
so savagely suppressed.

Those treasures will be bound in love
and lovingly expressed.
The memories are in my heart
and there they will remain
because to speak a word thereof
will bring me too much pain.

SHATTERED DREAMS

There they lie;
spread around me
a myriad shining fragments of
the gift she had brought me.
Shards of glass
each a reflection of a broken promise;
a gift procured but withheld.

And all that I can do
is to survey those shattered remnants
of unrequited dreams,
and replay them on an endless
reel of soundless, aimless,
misbegotten promises that
prick my heart
as those metaphorical shards
might have pricked my fingers.

What is left to me now
but to weep?

IT IS NOT A BLESSING

He kept his face turned
when he passed me by,
for he was one of Death's
fierce creatures,
reluctant to reveal
his features.

What made him change his mind?
Why did he choose
to find another outlet
for his malignancy?
Too much to hope for
some sign of benignancy?

How many times? How many times
have I encountered that dreaded
shade?
How many times did I avoid
his chilling touch, or am I
simply being paranoid?

But what is far more
of a chilling thought is
how many are the other souls
on whom he then alighted,
who took the place
to which I'd been invited?

WE LIVE IN FEVERED TIMES

It is a time of great change,
A time of revolt and revolution:
Political, social, artistic
And, alas, it would seem
Nature has decided to take a hand.
We no longer measure time by clocks
Nor calendars.
Time now moves in stages
Of disaster after disaster.

Disease, decay, and dissolution.
It has become a moveable feast
To nourish the soul.
A parable.
Method into metaphor.
Metaphor into madness.
It does not suffice to enhance
A universal truth.
History repeats itself;
Historians exaggerate.
Repetition alone does not create a parable.
Repetition is not reinforcement.

I try to put this into context:
A poet should be his own critic.
Poetry is the language of feeling
Science is the language of being.

We can leave it to the scientists
To determine the truth of outer reality,
With limited choices available at journey's end.
We too feel we need to make a choice
But the choice for us is always between evils
Each more devilish than the last.
What is the road upon which I should be travelling?
What choices will be available to me at the end of
my personal journey?

We were in the same place a century
ago, Our leaders then had different faces.
They wore different clothes and different masks.
Yet today they are essentially the same.
From conception through deception,
Ill-intentioned and ill-advised.
Trumpism is anarchist, nihilist and surréaliste.
Moral grandeur and courage are as much to be prized
And as little to be found now as then.
There is a kind of feverish madness in the world
today. We stand between Heaven and Hell In that
bleak place
Where no heart beats
Where no clock ticks.
The spirit that inhabits here
Does nothing to appease my doubts.

And at the end of the road, just as I thought,
Every sum will prove divisible by nought.

TRADITION

We'd always done it
that way.

We always used to salt the
bread after we had buttered it.
We always used to bless the
wine before we poured it out.

We'd always done it
that way.
I guess I always will

It lingers in my memory

Dismiss it as I may
I cling onto it still.
we'd always done it that way,
I guess I always will.

They always did it that way
Perhaps they do it still.
I used to do it that way,
Perhaps I always will.

THE ENGLISH COMPLAINT

That
wise old owl
Hippocrates
declared that
Man's health fluctuated with the
weather.* Illnesses flourished
in the change from season to season.
No surprise then
that, given the greatest heatwave
and drought
in decades,
the unexpectedly sudden
change from midsummer
to cold winter
overnight
should have produced
an onset of every variety
of complaint.

Being positive,
at least the rivers are once
more flowing.

As is my nose!

*[On Airs, Waters, and Places by Hippocrates]

THIS WAS MY FEAR

This was my fear:
That when I strove to move
Those visions in the night
My friends might overhear
The hidden thoughts I'd love
To banish from my sight.

This was my fear:
That what I thought I'd lost
Was merely out of view

SOMETHING TO CRY OVER

It has long been known that
large numbers of various
organisms, including the
pneumococcus, streptococcus,
influenza bacillus,
and many others,
that may kill us,
may be recovered
from the conjunctival sac,
especially if there is
obstruction to the overflow of
tears. Which only adds
to my fears.

ENIGMA

What are the truths that plague my mind?
A torture chamber could not be so
unkind as to submit me to such enigmatic
theories of then and there.

A wondrous sense of mystery;
a mystical sense of wonder.
Bite back anger, beat the drum
of thunderous joy to come.

I see myself still going
and find myself still yearning,
I lose myself unknowing
and meet myself returning.

These simple wonders
that do plague us
what a nerve!
Is it the vagus?

Or is it blocked synapses?
Distorted perceptions or
perpetual addictive patterns?

I must enjoy what is
rather than suffer concern for what is not.

Tunnel vision has to be expanded.
Cornucopia and not dearth has to be the aim.
What is the catalyst?
Perhaps I will find it
in the diamond clarity of waking dreams
amidst the chirping of cicadas.

Part II
FRENCH VERSE

TOUT CE QUE JE VEUX

Tout ce que je veux, c'est toi.

Tout dont j'ai besoin, c'est toi.

Tout ce que j'admire, c'est toi.

Rien ne me manque, sauf toi.

Et

si je quitte le monde

je le quitterai content,

car

je t'aurai connu,

et toi,

et toi,

et toi.

LE MIROIR A DEUX VISAGES

Parfois je me regarde dans le miroir
et c'est le visage de mon père qui
rend mon regard.

Et je sais que dans ce moment
il est toujours en vie parce
qu'il habite en moi.

C'est ainsi que nous atteignons l'immortalité.

Un jour peut-être mon fils
va se regarder dans un miroir et
c'est moi qui rend son regard.

MON ÉGLISE

Il n'y a pas un croix qui surmonte mon
église ni une étoile à six branches.

On n'y trouve pas un croissant
ni un swastika non plus.

Cette église n'existe que dans mon imagination
mais elle est plus puissante que la pierre.

SCANDALE

Entravé par les feuilles
d'automne sur un chemin boueux
Je me promenais
avec difficulté,
entouré par des vrais compagnons
à deux et à quatre
jambes. Et je me suis dit
si on me permet
encore quelques
ans de bonne santé
Je suis déterminé
à vieillir de façon scandaleuse

UN SILENCE PROFOND

Un silence profond.

Pour un instant
tout mouvement cesse
et mon esprit achève
le sommet
de la solitude.

Et puis
tout à coup
le bruit recommence
comme un ruisseau
brédouillant.
Le vacarme assourdissant
remue
les enchevêtrements
de mes pensées.

jusqu'à ce que. . .
jusqu'à ce que. . .
jusqu'à ce que
la paix
revienne.

Et c'est une
situation
qui se répètent
sans cesse.
Comme un robinet
qui coule.

Les gouttes de la
mémoire.
Les gouttes des espoirs.
Le bruit exaspérant,
épouvantable
qui monte,
qui fait revenir
des expériences
qu'on a cru
bien cachées.

Et après
recommence
la lutte.,
la bataille
entre
les souvenirs joyeux
et les chagrins.

Et au moment où
je me sens crevé
...
un silence profond

MOTS MÉLODIEUX

J'ai toujours été amoureux
des mots mélodieux
en français.

Quoique
ça me frappe comme curieux
que ces mêmes paroles
soient odieux
en anglais

FRANGLAIS FUN

Par ma foi!
said the gentleman so
bourgeois; but it is so, I swear,
quoth Moliere.
Il y a plus de quarante ans
and extant, I do declare,
que je dis de la prose
as everyone knows,
having enormous fun,
sans que j'en susse rien.

RÊVE DES CONFLITS ÉTERNELS

J'ai entendu le bruit
des balles explosant des armes à
feu, et mon coeur
a commencé à battre
en même temps que
mon esprit s'est élevé.
Plus haut . . .
encore plus haut.

Et j'habitais là
au dessus des nuages,
où je me sentais calme
sans peur des
attaques des terroristes.
Et je chantais
comme chantent
des personnes libérées.

En me demandant toujours
si c'était un rêve
et si la liberté
sera gagné
malgré ces forces
qui essaient d'arrêter
notre progrès.

Part III
HAIKUS
PARODIES
APHORISMS
SUNDRIES

FREEDOM

If you seek freedom
Search within your mind and clear
The shackles inside.

MEMORY

Why'd my train of thought
Halt before it got away?
It ran off the rails.

LOYALTY

My heart on your sleeve
inspirits me to believe
it's in safe-keeping.

LOVE

I still wear your heart
on my sleeve. It reminds me
of undying love.

LEARNING

You may lose the plot
but do not lose the lesson
unless you choose to.

IDENTITY

If you seek for me
Lift the stone on which you sit
You will find me there

TRANQUILITY

Tranquility is
nowhere to be found but in
excess of labour

IRONY

Those who the gods love
and are taken far too young
are the privileged

A HAIKU BASED ON A BASHO KOAN

A branch without leaves
A bird perches upon it
This autumnal eve

CLIMATE CHANGE

Ice floe disappears
passively into the sea.
The world is silent.

LABELS

My life's a label
Clinging to the packing case
Of my many moves

A CAT

Not to cause concern,
She moves stealthily through life.
But purr-posefully

SALVATION

Seeking salvation,
I advance remorselessly.
But pitifully.

CHOICE

You have the option:
follow the common path or
create your own trail.

PROMISCUITY

Promiscuity
luscious ambiguity
what acuity!

BOREDOM

Awoke this morning.
Nothing to complain about.
Life is such a bore.

FREE WILL

You may lose the plot
but do not lose the lesson
unless you choose to.

POETRY

I have nought to say
and yet I am saying it. . .
That is poetry.

THE ANSWER

I sought an answer.
Fool! I should have asked myself;
What is the question?

HAIKUS

You must love haiku
Simply because it knows when
Enough is enough.

MANTRAS

To ask the unanswerable question
is simple
To provide the irrefutable answer
is profound.

I can learn more from those who oppose
me than those who seek to please me.

The questing mind acts as a precipitate
and yet I find myself inclined
to place more faith in solvate. . .

I used to hate the thorns on my rose
bush. Then I discovered a thorn bush that
bore roses.

Solitude is not loneliness.

Poetry is disciplined frenzy

PARODIES

(T.S. Eliot)

I grow cold . . . I grow cold . . .
The drips shall drop from my nostrils uncontrolled.
Shall I put a sweater on? Should I risk a cardigan?
I shall dress myself in white, emulate a ptarmigan.
I have heard pelagic puffins on the shore.

I do not think that they were warning me.

(Nancy Sinatra)

These hips are made for bearing,
And that's just what they'll do.
One of these days these hips
Are gonna bear a child or two.

(Dorothy Parker)

I like to have a brandy
it makes my heart grow fonder
and gets me feeling randy,
just like a hot transponder.

(W.H. Auden)

He marched them up
He marched them down
He marched them
In and out of town.

(Shakespeare)

Shall I applaud thee, shall I bow and scrape?
Will you reward me, will you change the shape
Of my demise?
Shall I support you, shall I hold your hand,
While others lose their nerve at your command,
Or their disguise?

THE ZEN POET

The words I use are no better
Than those of any other poet,
But the spaces between the words . . .
The spaces . . . aah, those are my poetry.

THE INNER VOICE

I heard a voice that spoke to me
in tones so sweetly mellifluous
they filled me with a strange delight
and rendered speech superfluous.

POST HOC

Do not judge
my conclusions
before you have tested
my premisses.

UNTITLED

What can she know of love
who never love has known?

UNTITLED

I always feel much better for
the use of an apt metaphor.

VIVICULTURE

Sow the seeds of kindness
in the meadows of your life;
and reap the harvest of love
in the orchards of your heart.

METAPHOR

Do not plant a rose bush
in the shadow of an oak
and expect to see a beautiful flower.
Instead exult in the beauty
that is the mighty tree.

DISCLAIMER

Denial rose
unbidden to my tongue but
I could not disclose
the words that lay
unuttered
in my heart

THE PADLOCK OF MY MIND

I disengage the padlock of my mind
allowing thoughts free access
to what lurks behind
the spread of undisclosed agendas
and secrets unconfined.

A KOAN FOR A TURKISH COHEN

Oy veh Izmir.

PUNISHMENT

The worst punishment of all
Is not that you do not get what you want,
It is that you do get it.
But too late for it to do you any good.

MISANTHROPY

I wish I could rid myself
of the depressing possibility that some
people, somewhere, may be enjoying
themselves.

The park was closed today.
My weekly walk
was meekly marred
and weakly disarranged,
as was my disposition.
My heart was closed today.

Put it there, she said, and then
pursed her lips and, with a sharp
intake of breath, vanished.

Though naught is above
conjugal love;
there's no closer connection
than familial affection.

There it was again, that drumming
on my door. And once more when
I answered, no one was there.
It's been that way
my whole life through.
I always open doors,
but where are you?

What can she know of love
who never love has known?
What can she know of life
who never seed has sown?

MOLIÈRE ENFIN

“Well, I declare”
said Moliere,
or would have said
were he not dead,
and interested more
in poetry
than archaic
prosaic
podiatry.
“That anti-hero
of my play
Jourdain is his
sobriquet.”

APHORISMS IN FRENCH

Tranquilité

Rien n'est plus facile
que d'être tranquille d'esprit

Brexit

La constitution britannique est déchirée
Moi aussi!

Perfection

Parfois il faut accepter le pire
Afin d'arriver au meilleur.

