

Time



As I write it's midnight, that mysterious, mystical hour.
A ticking clock creeps along, cutting a silvery silence.
Moonlight strikes a barn owl, in the darkest shadows of night.
And Sirens sing nostalgic songs, dragging my spirit away.

Time is rust, a merciless plague, attacking a bicycle chain.
Time is wrinkles, deeply etched, on the face of a lonely old man.
Time is mildew, attacking the page of a long forgotten book.
Time is hope, disappearing fast, in an innocent prisoner's heart.

Time is a photograph, hiding in a book. Is that there really me?
Time is a teddy bear, trapped in the attic, longing for a hug.

Time is a box of favourite toys, coated by dust in a garage.
Time is a derelict Victorian house, its memories floating away.

Time is Johnny's Spitfire, resting on the Channel's bed.
Time is Susan's engagement ring, lost in a stone cold river.
Time is the Loch Ness monster, fantasy, fable or fact?
Time is a memory, shining through, on a dark and dreary day.

Time is priceless, a precious gift, a raindrop in a desert.
Time is pleasure, an infinite measure, of a life loved and lived.
Time is wasted and seeds are sown, fields of broken dreams.
Harvest dawns and farmers reap their crops of 'what could have' beans.

Time is wonderful but thunders along, ticking and tocking away.
'Tempus fugit' a Long-case whispers, devouring another day.

Days pass by and months and years and soon you're old and grey.
So don't waste your time, young fellows, treasure every day!

Tick, tock, tick, tock, tick, tock, tick, tock...



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The drifter

*There he is, the drifter, strutting around in those faded jeans.
A loser, a loner, a society misfit, aimlessly wandering around our town.*

He's 'stealing' a charity bag from a doorstep. A new winter's wardrobe, perhaps?

He's picking up discarded cigarette ends and lighting them up near the flats.

He's dragging a comb through his silver hair, coated with oil, dirt and grease.

He's resting his bruised and battered body, on a bench for a few minutes' peace.

*There he is, the drifter, strutting around in those faded jeans.
A loser, a loner, a society misfit, aimlessly wandering around our town.*

He's enduring a barrage of barbarous insults, from a shopkeeper who's yelling 'Get lost!'

He's staring at the face of Lewis' Snow Queen, her words a threatening frost.

He's strolling down a crowded street, counting concrete pavement cracks.

He's noticing people's silent stares, as they turn their ignorant backs.

*There he is, the drifter, strutting around in those faded jeans.
A loser, a loner, a society misfit, aimlessly wandering around our town.*

He's whispering his tragic tales of life, of horrors and unspeakable woe.

But everybody just turns away as nobody wants to know.

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I wonder...

I wonder what a goldfish thinks about, swimming in a bowl.
Is he dreaming of a bigger tank or a long lost family shoal?
Is he waiting for another fish to share his watery home?
Or is he happy all alone, King of his own glass dome?

I wonder...



I wonder what a parrot thinks about, sitting in a cage?
Is she happy talking and squawking, a performer on a stage?
Is she dreaming of her jungle, longing to stretch her wings?
Or is her spirit fading, forgetting what freedom brings.

I wonder...

I wonder what a brown bear thinks about, dancing in the street?
Is he happy on his chain, skipping to the beat?
Is he dreaming of a mountain, a forest or a meadow?
Or praying for a future and a better tomorrow?

I wonder...



I wonder what an old lady thinks about, sitting in her chair?
Is she happy in her home, smiling with a stare?
Is she recalling her husband, their perfect wedding day?
Or remembering her friends, who've sadly passed away.

I wonder...

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Sometimes

Sometimes, I feel strong...

as strong as a mighty oak tree, on a cold, winter's morn,
braving the broadside of countless merciless storms.

Sometimes...



Sometimes, I feel weak...

as weak as a dying warrior, on a blood soaked battlefield,
clutching still his silver sword and a tarnished, broken shield.

Sometimes...



Sometimes I feel brave...

as brave as a Gladiator, in a crowded theatre ring,
fighting off a lion, for what could freedom bring?

Sometimes...

Sometimes I feel helpless...

as helpless as a new born baby, crying for her mummy,
longing for her daddy's touch or the comfort of a dummy.

Sometimes...



Sometimes I feel grateful...

as grateful as a desert, soaking up the rains,
basking in the sunshine, a lizard on the plains.

Sometimes...

Sometimes I feel angry...

as angry as a lioness, cramped inside her cage,
a powerless predator, her eyes punished by rage.

Sometimes...



But most of the time I feel... **HAPPY!**

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Henry VIII Rhapsody

(To the tune of Queen's famous 'Bohemian Rhapsody')

Is this my new wife? Is her name Anne Boleyn?
Caught in a romance, I won't lose, 'cos I always win.

Open your eyes; young Anne is a beauty Queen.

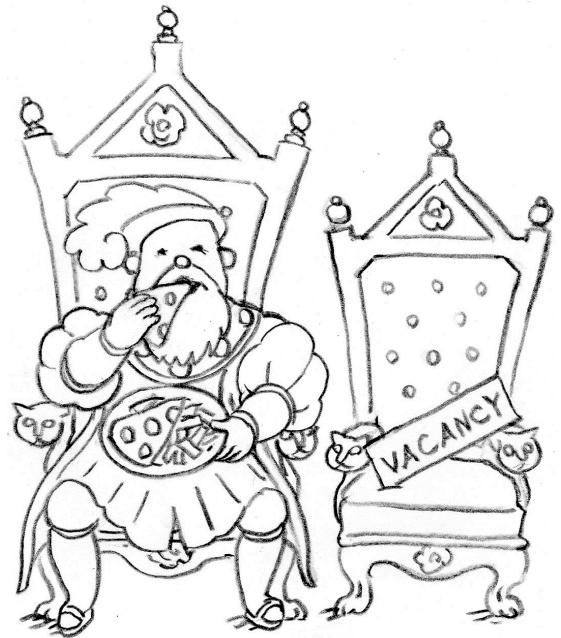
I'm just a fat King, the biggest in history.
Because I eat a lot of salty food.
Fish and chips when I'm in the mood.

Any way the food's cooked,
It doesn't really matter to me, to me.

Henry, just killed his wife!
Put an axe against her head.
Swung it, now she's dead.

Young Anne, her life had just begun!
But now fat Henry's gone and got his way!

Henry, ooh, didn't mean to kill his wife
but he'll just find somebody new tomorrow.
He'll carry on, carry on,
as if nothing really happened...



Too late, Anne's lost her head.
Sends shivers down my spine,
Catherine Howard's next in line!

Goodbye, cruel Henry, you've got to go!
Just eat and eat and eat until you burst!

Poem from 'Get lost!'
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Mr. Halligan

He shuffled onto the bus,
carrying an old, battered shopping bag.
I recognised him instantly,
my old teacher, 'Jack' Halligan.

Back in those days, he was a hard,
barking and biting Staffordshire Bull.

'Put your pens and pencils down!
Leave your rulers alone!'
Strange how you remember old teacher's
'catch-phrases', isn't it?

He was a terrible tyrant,
heartily dishing out that famous cane of his.
But now, on the bus, years and years later,
his power had evaporated in a hazy mist.

Slumped in a seat behind the driver,
he was a hot air balloon, deprived of gas.
His power over me was long gone.

Nobody on the bus knew him of course.
He was just an old man to the other passengers,
heading for the shops.

But he exposed me to a wealth of literature –
Orwell's 'Animal farm' and De Maupassant's 'Vendetta'.
How well I remember those powerful stories!

He demonstrated the art of storytelling to me,
reading aloud Steinbeck's 'Of mice and men',
his voice switching into an American backwater drawl.



He showed me how to write in cursive script,
his big, chalky hand gliding across the blackboard.
How he would effortlessly create a board of
beautiful, legible handwriting!

He was a wonderful, inspirational teacher,
whom I will never forget.

**He has lost his
power over me.**

Hasn't he?

Poem from 'I'm fed up!
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My favourite trainers

I placed my favourite trainers today,
into some charity bags.
It only seems like yesterday,
pulling off their tags.

They've travelled with me for countless miles,
in all sorts of weather,
treading through my ups and downs
and wearing out their leather.

As I dropped them into their humble abodes,
I said a little prayer.
Somebody, somewhere would use them,
despite their wear and tear.

An African teenager on the plains perhaps,
impressing his favourite girl;
or an Indian princess pauper,
giving them a whirl.

I placed the enormous bags outside
and waited for the van.
Tears poured forth from my bulging eyes
as I spotted the collection man.

I closed my door and sprinted upstairs,
dropping onto my King Size bed.
I buried my head into my pillow
and this is what I said:

*'May the soles of the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.'*



Kimiya Hickling, Rāwhiti School, New Zealand



Poem from 'My favourite trainers!'

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Two childhood jigsaws

One day, a folded charity bag
was pushed through my door.
'Save the earth,' the label read,
but I'd seen it all before.

I found an old scarf, a broken watch
and a pair of football socks.
And two jigsaw puzzles, their pieces still sitting,
in a faded, cardboard box.

The van arrived promptly, the very next day,
a battered but loveable Ford.
A man in overalls clambered out,
grabbing his brand new load.

I thought of my jigsaws I'd given away
as I'd played with them as a child.
I was swamped with anger and regret,
I wanted to run and hide.

Jigsaw One was Concorde's cockpit,
a difficult puzzle to complete.
Jigsaw Two was a herd of camels,
basking in the heat.

I closed my door and sprinted upstairs,
dropping onto my bed.
I buried my head into my pillow
and this is what I said:

'Dear Lord, I loved those jigsaws dearly.

So may they rest in pieces. Amen'

Poem from 'My favourite trainers!'

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