

Written Somewhere Sunny In The South-West

Poems Of Bristol

William Altoft

I am a writer from (and very often on) the city of Bristol. I write prose, poetry, and poetrose. Along with shorter poetry, I have written longer works, including the equally Bristol-centric *The Ballad Of Stokes Croft* & my first novella *The Floating Harbour*.

This collection was first published in 2023. All the poems found here were originally published on my personal WordPress, along with all my writing, and are still available there:

<https://williamaltoft.blog/>

I

Bristolians

I break the natch'rul, nuanced silence.

"There's a book – You know James Joyce?"

"Yep."

"There's a book he wrote – Have you heard of *Dubliners*?"

"Yep."

"I wanna write either a short story or a bunch of short stories called *Bristolians*."

"That'd be cool."

I break the natch'rul, nuanced silence.

"Ideas..."

"You got time."

She sleeps; I sleep –

we travel on 'til morning.

Bristol

You (down from a
sphinx-less chasm crossing
to a tide-less hub afloat (a
forged new cut bears the
vagaries of highs and lows
and ebbs and flows) that
meets a Gothic – spired;
spire-less – and most fair
chiseled chapel singing
memories of loaded ships
(a-sailed to catch the assail
of the wind) for voyage,
trade, and [Out, damned spot!]
for chains for rum and sugar)

are (old waterway that runs
away about the heart and centre,
under bus and boot and bike and
paw and car and cardboard
(coddled by a sleeping bag), beneath
the painted walls and the dancing
halls and the quarried stone – brought
over from the Roman spa town –
that lines the lead-up to the meeting
of a four-street welcome at an
arched entry on the Avon by the
ruins [Republic!] of a castle [Crown!]
before a broad and bustling shop-
ing quarter) my favourite

(out into the sprawl are all
(and any), few and many, who
mix and maintain (blended and
discreet) lives that're lived in
lots of ways: the flaws, follies,
phonetics, food, mannerisms,
music – a multitude converging
on the waterfront, walking on the water,
changing while it's changing in
response) place (and the glaciated
gateway scar turns a fort in-
to a port into a city,
floating on the sunlight in the river).

Tanka, With A Rhyming Couplet

Novella; ballad;
a play, and a short story:
the city is mapped
place by place by place by place;
mind by soul by voice by face.

The City Poetic

The city poetic –
not aggrandised voice,
its rhythm false.
Speak unspoken!
Dance the lines unblanked!

The city poetic –
sing silence from
the unstaged page,
the rhythm riv'ring through.
A river, undictated.

The city poetic –
within the ink-blue 'glyphs
the meaning makes no gestures
for to saw the vacant air.
The temperance is all.

All ink-blue meaning;
rhythm riv'ring;
unstaged, silent song –
to dance between the lines
is to voice th'city poetic!

Sketches Of Kingswood

"Fifteeepreeee firrah pouuuund!"

50p for a £?

...

What?

"Fresh, farrum strawrbreez – fifteeepreeee firrah pouuuund!"

But... is it a £?

Or...

Fift...

What?

Punnets placed upon the fake, green grass that shields the cheap, unfolded tables; gross glass overhead that holds the rain, keeping us 'n concrete dry.

But it wasn't only strawrbreez 'midst the shouts of swapping £s for pence: the air was ripe with vapour rising 'n sett'ling on produce anew.

- Cauliflowers (fluffy)
- Cabbages (green)
- Grapes; Bananas; Cherries
- Potatoes (unclean)

Humid hung the world between the written earth 'n sky; my sens'ry mem'ry etched an abstract record.

"Well, was it a wood that the king owned?"

"I mean... all the woods were."

"Were what?"

"Owned. By the king. Supposedly."

"Which king though?"

"I dunno... A Henry? A John? Who cares?"

"I cares."

"I doesn't."

"You would of if"

"Oh, don't!"

"What?!"

"*Would of!*"

"Pprrrrrrr..."

"Yeah – stop fucking saying it then."

"Would. Have."

"Yes."

"Anyway..."

"Anywhere..."

"Nope."

"Nope?"

"Kingswood."

Three boys. They threw their rubbish (A tracksuit's torn but worn with pride.) and missed. The bin (In th' hands of one was th' handle of his mate's foot-powered scooter.) died a death of rank starvation. Judging: the adult who assumed (Behind them loomed the strip of high street.) that they'd leave their rubbish drifting by the pavement. The bin revived; adult impressed; their boyhood hair gelled fast – beyond the bus stop queue they flew, foot-powered.

The sparse, unfettered prose of the pigeoned tiles of the pavement-street gleamglistened murky life with the rain of the grey-cloud cover. Waiting for the 43 across the road – hot tarmac rolled – were the denizens of this distant land, discarded by the gently gentrifying future, which, with its bright 'n bridged town centre, would only sweep its moneyed way for cleansing.

Pick 'n mix these high street shops. Those worth their weight in pure nostalgia – these must lay their shattered visage in the haze of Egypt's sands, their monumental memory now scattered. Search your mind, 'n mine, 'n Google Images...

The bus is pulling up 'n in, with *Centre* 'cross its face. We pay with cash – no masks; no proffered smartphones.

Sparse are the stony seats in cushioned comfort, but in lives they boast a story each, 'n each: replete with stories...

To Bristol Town!

Busy, busy, busy bus:
can you handle all of us?
Filling upstairs; filling down...
Can you take us all to town?

P'rhaps we won't stop anymore,
now there's no space – seat or floor.
'Less someone wants to alight...
through crowds they'll have to slip or fight!

Now we're trav'ling pretty fast!
Not far left this journey hast.
Traffic, traffic: sud'nly gone!
To bottleneck elsewhere you're borne.

Busy, busy, busy bus:
can you handle all of us?
Filled's the upstairs; filled's the down...
Now, take us on to Bristol town!

II

A Morning's Musing

Infinite bassline – bass repeats,
with ending flourish varied.
Those in queue talk movies.
B'hind tessellated counter:
New Cut Coffee.

A Ballad Here On Wapping Wharf

The sun had fallen b'yond its peak;
the clouds coursed through the blue that hid the black.
An end had come unto the week
'n all th'way onto Monday th'weekend laughed.
Upon the breeze, life's sounds did sail;
the people pottered past.
B'yond yonder tree, a baby wailed –
a pulled shirt in her grasp.
A-pecking at the paving slabs,
an urban dove searched 'bout for things to eat.

Palm pressed to palm – two women walked
across the neat-placed bricks that paved the ground.
The urban dove crossed over next,
now looking for another spot to scrounge.
Some baskets – Yellow! Orange! Green! –
were filled with fruit 'n veg.
Wov'n wicker kept the produce clean.
A common gull, o'erhead,
flew off toward The Matthew's mast
to light upon the crow's nest for a screech.

Queuing up for coffee, some
faces yet covered up with rags on string,
Brist-Ohl-Yuns held their places,
waiting patiently. A waiter – pierced 'n ringed –
looked o'er, with consternation,
at the lack of empty seats.
She offered for to take some
empty trays. Now off her feet,
she smokes upon the shaded steps.
A child, led by a dog, pretends to lead.

Pink, white, 'n purple; ripped jeans;
suited; shirted; shorted; floribund; high-socked...
"Ship-shape 'n Bristol fashion!" See
the varied costumes modelled 'cross the docks!
Hear varied English; Somali;
hear Spanish spoken fast!
'Midst Chinese, catch the Polish
tongue! Now Patois patters past...
A collage clothes the wharf in knit,
kaleidoscopic manner, look, 'n speech!

The sun continued on aft' noon,
sailing for to pass the Avon Gorge.
'Tween float 'n New Cut: passing through,
the city danced its song on Wapping Wharf.
Now wand'ring off, to write elsewhere,
I joined the collage dance.
That urban dove had found a fair,
young pigeon to romance.
And, as the Avon finds the sea,
the poem found its end in ellipses...

And Across From Me?

Tuesday 26th April, 2016
9.33pm

Sat, back against the industrial crane, left foot out over the water, right leg knee-bent, book on thigh.

Stillness. So still, so quiet.

Rumbling, presumably traffic, on the edge of hearing.

Across the river, sat on steps, one guy beatboxing, standing beside, one guy freestyling.

To my left:

The Matthew, moored a slight distance away from the dock wall.

Deep blue sky, dark grey cloud.

Lights of expensive living.

To my right:

Row of dead industry, cranes + sheds + tram tracks.

Even the industrial museum is gentrified, modernised, not how it was when I was younger, & walked along the tracks and sleepers.

The Pyronaut, The Mayflower, The Balmoral.

Deep blue sky, plane lights, a planet.

And across from me?

Lit up by the blue-light-lined trees behind & beside it, the slave-named bridge, Pero's bridge.

A naval ship docked & moored by the Arnolfini.

I saw it arrive the other day. Yesterday?

Military might.

Middle-class art.

It's blocking Cabot's view.

Lit restaurants & bars.

Small yachts.

The Gothic cathedral, the red-lit peak of Cabot Tower on Brandon Hill, the Colston Tower with its top floor of yellow light & name in red.

Gateway into the city.

Floating Harbour.

The locked-in tidal waters of the river Avon resting under, in, & around the city it built.

From A Rippled Plank Of Wood

I

! ! ! ?!
[]
! ...

II

Spell the warmth of the glaring
sun 'n the softness of the
wintrous, wisping wind.

III

... ,
... .

IV

V

Softglaring
wintrous, sunwisp
wind...

VI

[.enD]

Yours, Mine,

Postscript

There's a child (Are you her?),
just across the floating harbour,
waiting on the breeze-swept steps
of the cathedral.

Afterword

How do I write the
quiet of the starlit water?

Brunel's Butt'ry Sanwidge Shoppe

Six fat motorbike-men,
the chromehorse-stable to the side
by the dormant tracks,
speak gruff 'n all the same
(There's a fleet of feet
on boards that break the water,
padd'ling with their long, long sticks.).

"Thurrteefore?!"

Collection time for someone;
someone's stuff is there;
it's Thurteefore's.

"Thurrteefighv?! Thurteesix?!"

No relation.
Relatively cold,
this breezesome morning – bracing
(A wolf?! No – a husky dog!)
[An engine neighs at the stables
saying (loudly): "I'm ignited!"
making ev'rybody jump.].

BUPP

People write *beep* for a car-horn,
but I could swear
it just went:

BUPP

Free-verse is
increduhbuhly-
fucking-
easy,
you know.
Itzyer thoughts out-loud,
with random punctuation.

*Ah, the ragman draws circles,
up 'n down the block...*

The Cup For Tea

I used to sit here
reading about Ancient Egypt.
I used to sit here
writing notes.
I used to sit here
on older benches,
without the lux'ry of a canvas roof.

I used to sit in
the wind of the morning,
hearing them
shout out numbers.
I used to – "Numbuh 75!" –
walk to and from along the sleepers.

I'm sat here now,
still writing –
but the notebook's numbered '8'.
The cup for tea's one
of few things
that haven't changed in two decades.

"78!"

The Matthew by the cranes and the water's still, still gifting the city to the world.

"79!"

One day I might
fin'lly write
about someplace else.
But – "80?" – here
I'm sitting now,
looking at 'n writing on the harbour.

Another Moment Here 'N Then

This is so peaceful...
Faintdistant screech 'n undulation
(That's not sarcasm -
'tis part of all this peace.)

and murmurings of – "58!" –
slowdrifting conversations;
a runner's even footfalls;
a whistled four-note stretch
of a tune begun/continued in the mind.

The breeze feels like an echo
of a cold too cold to bear,
as the gull glides on its
currents and the waves of winter light.

Another scattered, ink-kept
moment moves on, not looking back.
Remember it?
Remember it.
T'was peaceful...

A Pint Of Gluten Free

Here I'll sit again;
I sat here once.

I have/I will have
written in the waves
of echoed song.

I sit now where
I sat then and I'll
sit, then, where I'm now,

tryna leave blue ink
on notebook paper.

Three Tanka, Then A Whole Haiku

Lean, anchor, low
your oxidated grappling beam;
sunken chain-link laid,
its mass upon
the Great Western dockyard.

Bind your barreled
wood, you rings of
rustsome iron; reaching...
Contents kept.
The grain is mismatched 'cross the breaks.

kkcoo coooo?
kkcalling 'dustrial dove,
'long undulating urban stone
it steps 'n stops 'n, flut'ring, flies,
to perch 'top tattered post.

Sun, searing;
th'ocean atmosphere refracts.
Gull glides o'er river's surface.

Tobacco Fact'ry Tanka

Within her hands –
the lunar lantern,
fingertip-fixed; floating.
Backlit by the bones of industriality,
she drapes her gaze; her cov'ring falls...

The Bridge Across The Avon Gorge

A chasm split by
glacier, astride the river

that turns its tide in
great height and great depth between,

the woods awash with
green, on the south and the west,

without abridgment
to the village of Clifton.

T'was a contest held
that drew out the mind-design:

towers of the Nile
Valley, sphinx suspending stone.

Artist-engineer:
Isambard Kingdom Brunel.

Stops 'n starts 'n stops;
towers built of unwashed stone

stood alone - the gorge
beneath them, Avon between -

only connected
by a single iron stretch,

along which one could
travel o'er in a basket.

Since Queen Square riots
interrupted first, the bridge

from woods to Clifton
had struggled t'ward completion.

At last, b'yond halfway
through the nineteenth century,

though ne'er adorned by
guard'yuns of Ancient Egypt,

nor washed and painted
as the pillars of Karnak,

opened and crossed was
the Clifton Suspension Bridge.

Now backed by hot air balloons.

To Reach Through Glass 'N Time

I

Corinth'yun pillars parse.
The Bath-stone, piled 'n placed, entombs.
Engraved reliefs entice – set-sails
'gainst castle walls.

Arch o'er entry hollows holding
quartz 'n ash reflecting flitting
momentary, time-trapped instances
of starlit being.

Flock –
wings abreast a covered sky.
The pane that stands between millennia.

II

In dark interior it's shelved,
a scattered scene of lives cohered
about it, th'little bundle – bound –
of twine – entwined.

A ball, now thrown now still
now caught above the Ra-
resplendent sand; the shadows
of the children hieroglyph
across a temple wall.

III

I'd place my palm
on yours if I could reach
through glass 'n time.

IV

I'd hold your hand.
If e'er I shall,
you felt it.

Pink, Lit, 'N Green

A poem, p'rhaps, for this place?
I've not written (Right?) here before.
A place so full and hillside-
located; pink, lit, 'n green.
I have, however, sans-writing been
in here thrice, and sat on high-
seated stools on wooden floor,
eating doughnuts of exquisite taste.

III

Cascade Steps

Light lightly glim'ring;
singing surf; cascading time;
slatted-wood t'mark where
Iteru meets her Eden.

Over the water,
w'thin the waves of crashing
flame, I sit 'n write, to give
my riv'ring thoughts an
ink-blue chance at freedom...

The wind rescinds;
the breeze blows on;
the sound-waves sail o'er peaks 'n troughs –
a cold, November morn'
about to crest its noon.

I'll take the
trail of sun the Avon
lays before me, 'til I see,
upon that cobbled corner,
th'leaves of Autumn strewn...

At The Entrance Of The Afternoon

12.01pm

This winter wind,
wispful in its wistsome wonder,
wears its wawtry cloak.
Flame stands in its ungentle passing;
maps back-lit by unnatchrul light.

Serene...
Steps upon a floating city;
gaze upon the world you've entered.

To Close Out A Letter

And now I sit
on the top step of the right-hand side
(looking o'er toward the cranes),
whilst the cascade is quiet, still –
there is no water flowing downward.

Will you dance upon the wooden-slatted platform?
Will you recreate the waterfalling river in your eyes?

Asking/Begging

A gift a-given.

Another now...

As with those others, I'll not help you.

I'll toss you words

you'll never read.

A Sonnet On The Harbourside

Tape-arrows placed upon the red-wood floor;
famil'yur pillars painted white anew.
Rope running – frayed – from sanded standing posts;
lift-lockdown wind that winds its breezeway through.
Outside, upon the paved 'n railing-ringed
walk – sheltered – way, where Sunday patrons sit,
the sun, through th'river's auld reflection sings
on th'wooden slats below the Cascade Steps.
Black, filtered heat within a paper cup,
that comes to me from silent order made,
spills out 'n o'er upon this sonnet, for
to write this moment on this pen-lined page.
At last, here in this lifeful harbour home,
I sit 'midst Bristol and compose a poem...

Written Somewhere Sunny In The South-West

I

A Stream Of [Haiku] Consciousness

As regular
here as the river is
spiriting;

time-torn,
temporally-tangled,
temporary...

descended
in/directly from
primordy,

thus:

as unique
as everybody else
is.

As alone
(yet as accompanied)
as our planet,
living 'midst the raging entropy;
breathing, miraculously, in a vacuum.

Take that
tanka as a tribute to a
floating world;
a floating life danced
blue and green, regardless.

II

Life & Space & Flies & Time

Fly, fly, frantically flit –
a life as short/as long as 'rise to 'set.

Move through time another way,
see space in greater range around you.
Stillness (for a moment; for an age)
upon the edges of a curved and falling world.

Fly, flies, the sun has been and gone –
the pen's already written out the rest.

Momentum felt as sep'rate moments:
such is time.
Queued up, a-waiting patiently,
poised and ready to pass on and through.

Countless and chaotic things, filtered
by perception: such is space.
An undifferentiated ball of heat,
giving up its life to live a little.

Beautifully bleak and sudden:
such is life.
A brazen, bril'yant, ape-shaped light,
shining singing dancing, nonetheless.

Hawking Written Wares

11.12am

Eye-catching... YesNo!

Avoidant gaze.

The footfall flux meanders.

Atop the auld laid slabs,
my display stands.

1.52pm

No sales!

Some chats.

Eight minutes more...

Tanka From A Slightly Diff'rent Universe

A view anew
(an old view revisited)
gives a slight –
a profound, tremendous –
change of perspective.

A diff'ring
(to the usual) time of day,
adorned with diff'rance,
grants a slight/profound, tremendous
change of perspective.

P'rhaps I'll
write one with the
pen in my
left hand, for further
change of perspective.

Milk Stout

Stout standing can,
mapped o'er with Bristol.
The eve matures to eve'ning...

A Friday Night Near April

For whatever reason, my mind
presents my mind's eye with
a memory of walking home,
with my guitar, from school.

(buzz

beer

bustle)

What caused it to re-surface?

A mem'ry of my antecedent
self set on a certain
or uncertain path, bound
or free to be the one from
whom was guidance given
to this ink; life to all this paper.

Now that's a crowd of people
(fifteen in and but one out)
to fill the space about the
tired taps, the clinking glass,
beneath the raised voices!

Beneath the raised voices sinks
the sound of someone leaving
with another – now their table's occupied.

For whatever reason, memories
of walking home from school,
with my guitar, have ceased their
surfacing, and so a poem's ended.

A Thought, Through Pen, On Paper

Still horses
'pon a Merry-Go-Round.
Their bridled porcelain –
on poles of gold
they slumber.

I Saw The Girl-Child, Standing

At Pero's Bridge,
where th'cobbles turn to metal
(mist-surrounded),
a blaze-blue spirit, wonder-rapt,
her hair the sunfire, stands.

She runs ahead;
beside me –
her hands about her heart.

A Quite Contrastful Quatrain

A(gain...)t last, less the wind-
swept streetside 'n its trials –
as Ind'ya burns, I'm
allowed back in cafés.

Society Café Tanka

Chatter: less.
There are no clinking ceramic cups.
Th'breeze breaks unbound through th'open doorway.
Nevertheless...
I write a poem in a café.

A Sonnet On The Surface Of My Coffee

Swirling swiftly – waters magellanic,
coursing 'midst the void of foamless 'fusion,
search their sweeping way, by force determined;
inev'tability's their god-Guide. Spun,
inverted waters, 'breast a ring of cloud,
break bounds of preevyus pattern-paths to tread
new riv'ring metre manifest in hot,
black life that, to ceramic edges, spreads.
Now sparse the signs of entropied life sit,
floating despite th'impossibility
of ought but only nothing in the end –
glor'yus, ungentle, fraught expression; free.
In stillness, yet, the precious echo rings.
E'en in the absolute, life can't not be.

Another Poem

On new ideas, as new year comes
approaching from the east,
I dwell 'n work
in cafés new;
in notebooks filling slow.

Though passed prolific-penning may
now be, I do, at least,
write still, alert,
as-yet not through –
as these new lines now show.

Adventures in sharing my stuff
myself continue on...
As th'next year in
a calender;
a life fills out with plans,

I write another poem for
to reassure someone
(Me?) that nothing
will hinder
this pen that's in my hand!

Wreflected

I see myself
beyond the pane,
o'er where leaf-litter lies.
I write; I drink; I'm passed through
by Brist-ohl-yuns.

IV

Unlimited

Muse – unlimited;
unbound – in th'breaking,
captured tide...
Paddling swan in feathers;
the trees in leafless rest.

ふたりがすわります。
さんにんはかどをとります。

Life's A

Life's a wander
'round the harbourside,
from sunrise to sunset,
off to the past via the present.

Life's a walk a-
round the waterfront,
backpack full of notebooks,
giving thoughts a chance to persevere.

Life's a linger-
ing of starlight long
after extinguishment,
words from minds from matter that's dispersed.

Life's a wander
'round the harbourside,
from sunrise to sunset,
tryna bridge the future to the past.

Shriek; Undulation

I

Do you hear –
without; within –
the seagull calling?

II

Where else but on
the etchless stone,
'breast Cabot's cobbled corner,
would course my thoughts?
Without; within – gull calling.

III

Avon, Iteru
(Frome ignored!):
rivers that, cities, built.
The Theban peak – red-mount;
the glacial gorge.

IV

Do you see –
within; without –
the Aten falling?

A Tanka On The Corner Of The Harbourside

Moss-green: a ring
around old cobble, lifted
on th'crest of rising roots.
Were't not for my brief perception,
t'would be tempestuous.

Sat By Old John Cabot

*Chorus,
led by th'swooping few,
shriek songs in called response.
Here't began;
here't'll end.*

Gaze o'er, oh stoic,
statuesque, 'n
wait a while a-wond'ring:
where, in wand'rings
riverlong, thy vessel
vanished wakeless?

The benches 'round
sit closer yet,
all moved but for
th'older two –
ah, closer then
my pen can quill
its inkwork, wakeful way...

Crack cobbles, mossy mud
'n cigarette stubs, strewn.
Blow gentlesoft, pandemic breeze,
'breast an unop'n'd tomb.
Cry chorus, calling cresting
waves of undulating sound.
Watch, oh silent Sunday morn',
for blood-congealed crown.

*The Aten, apexed
in the white-shrouded blue,
tips toward its phoenix-fire descent.
Here't ends;
here't'll begin.*

Beside The Trees, Deciduous

The sun upon
the bench upon
the cobbled corner;
clouds cling – fast –
to the southernmost horizon.

There's a bracing, blue-bright layer
'fore the ocean – black.

Bonus couplet, in half-rhyme:

Too much Skyrim;
not enough writing.

A List Of Things I Noticed At The Harbour

Lighthouse unlit; the sails unset;
the blue – bright – 'breast the morning;
the dog's bark ricochets in waves
that break 'gainst seagull's calling;

pigeon pecks the mossied cracks; a
gull, its young coat grey,
steps closer t'ward the quay's stone edge;
piercing the clouds – the rays

of flick'ring flame, eight minutes old,
that danced 'cross th'frozen void
to singe the damaged atmosphere
'n heat the earth; now poised's

a man of many sun-led, searching
cycles 'pon a post;
the clouds relent their risen rain;
th'wake of a narrow boat

dances upon, across, 'n through
the river's cold expanse
to die of life's momentum lost;
another pigeon lands...

A Seagull Sees Me Writing

Back on black-
rail, resting 'gainst the
barrier's gull-side,
looking over at
four sleeping giants.

Rush, ruffling wind.
Peak 'n fall, fraught Frome-fed Avon.

Today: Ten Tanka

I

Tower peaks;
quartet sleeps;
the gull's braced, as am I –
the lock-gate, leading southward,
bridges o'er.

II

Rice-husk holds
my coffee. Folding up:
the inkless page.
I perch like Giovanni
'pon his lumber.

III

With nary a wake
it works its way
on through the floating harbour –
a manned-kayak.
Gulls disperse.

IV

In shelt'ring porchway-
entrance to the Arnolfini,
I
re-place myself.
The gull gives up its bracing.

V

Windbreaker は
むらさきです upon
the one half of the pair a-walking.
Shaggy dog:
your fringe 'n beard match mine.

VI

Elegance...
It strolled on by.
Colour...
It just walked past.
People-watching; people, watching me.

VII

Tanka by the banks-a,
with my notebook near its end –
a sunsome Sunday 'neath the harbour sky.
I probably look homeless
to these fam'lies...

VIII

As I adore alliteration,
I must muster up
(Assonance, too!)
three tanka more.
Well, now two.

IX

I watched the leaves
go sailing by,
as the noon killed off
the morning.
(It just turned 12pm.)

X

The water level stays
e'er as it is, e'en as the rest
of us do rise 'n fall
while floating
on the Avon...

Heatwaved Harbour

The searsome sun seethes
heathaze, hamm'ring hard
the scorch-scarred cobble.
Artificial canopy.
No breeze...

Shimmershine

Sun shimmershine threads music's waves
with th'ripples of a glist'ning scene.
In kanji-cascade, numbers water-
fall upon the pregnant pauses.

As tanka looms – "Take me! I'm done!" –
a quatrain quells it: "More to see!
The child who eats the twisting treat;
the gull who rides the unseen surf."

Flux, feathers! Plumes of greyscale-white;
spring wind whips, gently coursing
past blossomed branches, tentatively
treading where the winter's been.

Climbclamb'ring girl, with your forehead marked,
somehow, with ice-cream debris:
stop terrifying me 'n your guard'yuns
as you rush the river railing...

Makeshift pre-drinks 'neath nested trees
'neath sky 'neath satellites;
new music threads its rippling waves
through th'sun's soft shimmershine...

Four Poems For Me; For You

I

Mallard marks my
morning's myanderings;
moorhen munches moss.
My mind's metred.
Muse mirrors.

In the couplet-epilogue,
I let go th'alliteration.

II

The cranes cry
to the cov'ring cloud;
I'm cold, as I sit writing.

III

Semi;
-colon,
dash, 'n Oxford Commas
take their final stand 'n
list their grand achievements.

IV

hahuh

!nice 'n earlee

BPAARK

?yeah. Pendswotheeofferiz

soe lighk

mmm

!yeh

pupupkikikikikuh

kuhkuhkuhkik

...UM...

PUHRK?!

"Just a coffee shop, or like?" In incompleated query's his reluctance.

A Scene I Seen By Th'River

Sifting through the seagull's song,
amidst sporadic breeze,
the sunfire breaks the emptied cloud
to strike upon the waters, proud;
the ferry boat decrees
that one might learn the river's song,
were one to pay their ferry's fees...

Travels With A Flex-Grip Pen

ffffllutterrrrr

pluuusshhhhh TONK

One fades out; the other lands before me.

Small steps – so many;

long strides – so few.

The passing by of generations.

Ferry me

upriver,

Matilda of Bristol.

What kept

these few green leaves

‘mongst winter’s branches?

["Whimper."]

Police digitally dredge the harbour.

Ominous of tragedy...

"Fiff

tee

siiiiix?!"

As The Rowing Teams Row By

And now their wake moves me,
the sloshing of the water loud.
Rosy-fingered dawn; established morning.

A Scene, Translated

A rooster-tail
at winter's end –
my hair in lockdown-length.
In loops of Latin phrase,
a standard's placed.

Breeze breaks in laughter
loosed; **kuhl**l~~ain~~kkinkcnk
sothairyugoe!
hahihihihuh hyeh-uh?!
[I pull upon my rooster-tail.]

In tanka – twonowthree –
the fourfour phoniclash of raydyoes
plash forth, fused with
snippetalk as strands of
now (to me; t'you – then...).

A scene translated
by me, with my hair tied-up.
(Cabot Corner; 22/03/21; 4.14 午後)

The Matthew Spreads Its Wings

Say-uls set in 'creasing size;
kkcookcoo?! cranes, their perchly poise
between the spire's cresting cross
'n th'rowing ladies –

in bant'ring back 'n forth,
abreast the sunless, woody shade,
shakes peerly, patt'ring conversation,
Avonside.

The mildly milksome coffee cools –
nepenthe e'er ne'er needed –
as by the floating harbour
rests the railway.

In screeching seagull song
sounds out senescent afternoon,
whilst th'air alights upon the water –
rent reflection.

Find new land...

Leave the red-rock cliff
beneath the Gothic tow'r,
its spireless peak o'erwatching,
to sail toward two
ice-cleft cliffs,
unspanned 'breast tide-peaked blue.

*Corm'rant swims
in
seagull waters...*

Vessel flaring wing-
widths far to
find sky-river currents;
its crow's nest green
'n white whilst waves
the blood-hued dragon cross.

*A chilling
tide –
sky-river's coursing.*

The river's mouth,
that sweeps below
the glen-green Celtic isle,
now opens up
to see far dist'
horizon helmed by fire.

*twihtwih tweeetwih?
PKAH!
tuhweetwih.*

Leave to find
new land - but
what to call it?

Now rest, relic,
alongside industry...

Now sleep in
seagull sounds
'n sun-dried ink...

Tanka, With A Bonus Quatrain

World's End

Swan – swept along.
Momentum marks the half-hid hull.
Day-drinker ponders; rises;
leaves the poem.
The dang'rous water – deep – buffets the quay.

At this spot, this world's end –
th'muse's inexhaustible.

Sorry

Patter, patter, pigeon feet,
looking for some shit to eat.
I'd feed your bobbing head – alas,
there's just no food within my grasp.

Three Lines At Cabot Corner

End of May...

Sun sweeps; pandemic breeze.

Life alights 'pon wooden benches.

I Wrote A Poem While I Waited Out The Rain

Keep me, corner, tethered
to the cracked 'n cobbled dock,
upon which winds my narrative
in mist-haze morning fog,

whilst a-whence these breeze-
waves river from – cliff spire –
sings out 'n tells of hour bells
'neath th'cloud-hid morning fire.

Under the patchwork canopy
that catches falling rain,
I feel I'll find that off my mind
will send me on again...

But beyond this sculptured edge
I know not t'where I'd head.
The river spills out to the sea
and's by the currents led...

V

Against A Tree In Queen Square

Finished, then, 's one summer's day,
in memory and type, to be
read out/into;
entering the pathways of the past.

A
new
day begins.

Somewhen
to be
and not to be
re-written/-rendered/-read/-interpreted.
Lent an
ineradicable existence,
gifted
heard articulation, stand my
thoughts.

Queen Square Haiku

Haiku:
like the blues –
easy; impossible.

Where is he now,
cy'cling around?
Moving metal-music.

TUMP
pprrr... pprrrrr....
tap

Imagine
comprehending
how far away the sun is...

How do you
spell
the smell of the bark of a tree?

Th'only rule
(really) is: it simply has
to feel like one.

The un-sovereign ant
explores my t-shirt landscape.
A whistle through the airwaves.

Haiku.
Only haiku.
Lots of haiku.

The wind is
alive
and I can't write it.

?
, :
.

Poe eh tree.
Pough e treigh.
Poh ea trea.

Stewpid
bludee
langwijn!

Against Another Tree In Queen Square

A quite & very welcome
Spanish Armada
descends upon/
descended on
the port-place at the bridge.

The quite & very welcomed
rider from the Low Countries
is surrounded/was
surrounded by
a gath'ring/gathered group.

A quite & very welcome
little period
of regarding/
of regarding/
I regard the afternoon.

Tanka Taken From A Tree-Trunk

Sun-silhouette;
the slanted cone that
crowns – orange – his head.
King Will'yum walks, in wettened-sand,
his horse – still now 'n nowhere.

Leaf-litter lay –
in sea-green grass the marsh-march moves...

Again Against A Tree Here In Queen Square

Alone, a lamppost
lit by sun; Bath-stone
borders, basks, 'n beckons.
Trooping past: a generation.
Moving fast: th'future finds its steady way...

Through Street & Square

I k-
now
not, yet, how deep,
eternal, far it
reaches; how distantly it spans.

Through street and square –
Persist
unleashed anger –
even
right down into the
as
middle
chaos
of
enthralls.
irascible and fragile
life that's lost.

Fire & Starlight

Far-reaching fire,
its glare on green-grass;
gravel.
A centre-piece surrounded.
Echo, chaos...

My eyes close o'er, lens-shielded.
Beside myself, flame-fury flaring; calm.

King William Tanka

The sentence structure
streams about my meandering mind...
Heat radiates from fires;
heat bleeds from th'radiator.
The high-backed bench wears copper relics.

On King Street

A turmoil-tinged tranquility...
Billowing in: breeze-borne leaves.
The Trow's resuscitated – see
the blackwhite gable draped
along in hanging baskets
buffeted (The milk stout plummets!)
'pon their links of chain.
Change...

To tread o'er written paths,
all taken; making all the diff'rence
lie the time 'n space in constant
flux, ephemerally constant,
coursing in their formless unity.
Now's then 'n then's yet further.
Passed...

Reflecting On The Recent Present

An alley, open.

Through glass: the tiles, in rain-swept sick;
soft tissue-leaves, disintegrating.

Under The Shelter Of St. Nick's

Headphones off.

Rain writes a rhythm
restlessly
upon the pigeon panes,
as drones the filt'ring
fan-blade box;
pacing, the man complains.

The deep, dark border
green that wraps
its wooden beams stall-side
contains the scarred 'n
padlocked slats,
above which doth abide

the Bath-stone, hollowed
arches, aching
echoes mercantile;
while 'tween cracked stone
disintegrates
the tissue – torn; exiled.

The wind-waves ferry
only onward
th'scents of wawtry wood
and th'smells of rainswept
stone, in place
of all that which it could

contain 'n carry
– crest 'n fall –
were th'market not asleep...
Only the rainkept
pigeon panes
do, safe, those mem'ries keep.

A Café Revival Comment In Free-Verse, With Sprinkuhlings Of Kanji & Hiragana

The free verse
in translation – ni! hon! go!
literiteration of the 日本語 –
of Itō Hiromi is added to
(I didn't know I had it
on my palm.) 黄金色
by Golden Raffi, 名
who does not retrieve [At all.] despite the name;
despite the name, he's white 'n won't retrieve!
The droolful droplets
that were on my hand 手
(左; ぼくの; 手)
(hidari; boku no; te)
that splashed from out his open mouth –
gumsmiley with his canines 'n carnassials
on show because
he got
attention –
.

So,
I got a big
splodge
of his drool on
a page of my book.

At least,
it didn't cover
any words!
言葉

P.S.

Also,
I overheard
(and [I assume] incorrectly)
I overheard someone order
"the Amish breakfast".

VI

The Pit At St. James

Found at St. James fayre:
le miscellaneous. Now?
Characterless pit.

A Song Of Poems

Up and on, to follow
floating years is but a brace
of months of many sessions;
eight weeks of storytelling;
three tales of varied verse.

Bards of brick spray-painted.
Told through tense interpretation,
their tales light the night
and meet the morning.

An island all rivered 'round
in fields of fayres and outcasts,
where't was razed and, after, raised,
that story-song might capture a place
whose form doth never last.

Up and on, to follow –
ready is a song of poems.

“You’re Not Gonna Help Me?”

Don't you
look them in the eyes when
you refuse to give them money?

It Lay, Off'ring Still

On Turbo Island:
tattered sofas; cold, grey ash.

Home for those in want,
threatened by development.

It passed its time, from
Easter Island heads and grass

to bare patch of ground,
likely to be claimed and paved.

It lay, off'ring still
a home for those who're homeless.

Leave it, please, for those in want.

Hai(tea-)ku

African tea-leaf.

Hungarian tea-maker.

English tea-drinker.

A Mere Suspended Coffee

Here,
but for the spite of gods,
sit they.

Watching from (a mere
suspended coffee) cafe
tables.

There,
but for the purest chance,
go I.

Watching from (a mere
suspended coffee) stoops and
pavements.

]]]] or, A Poem Perched In Poco

[Light].[Light].[Light].[Light].
[Light].[Light].[Light].[Light].

Sloped in slow reflection.

[Stop][Stop][Go...]

The candle on the island
lights the moving, glass-bound muse.
[Strike!]. In silent fire sits,
'mid smoke dance-dissipation.

Jesticulating silhouettes
sitstand on roadshoreside.

Sloping, hunched memory
of form found 'midst the moving
sound. [A flashing: Blue].
And you...

[].[].[].

...fading out; detailessness...
Musing, move-bound, glass-gleam lights.
A profile part-remembered in
the pressed 'n burning sand.

[Ligh[Ligh[Ligh[Ligh[Ligh

Oh, To Be Back At The Canteen!

A searing sit in sunglasses,
beneath the fist of progress –
I've not been here in fucking ages!
New art; trends entrenched.
Populous pints 'n people being.

A Canteen Tanka & A Comment

A day releasing
paper copies; a day purchasing
drinks.
Writing about sharing writing;
t-shirt 'n the covers of this notebook: pink.

Oh, that rhymes.

Coffee & Pineapple Juice

Walked up to Stokes Croft
in the blist'ring sun, blaze-burning –
I've left some leaflets 'n some booklets.
White wins
by checkmate!

Some Senryu & Zome Zappai

A tiger shark
and beluga whale –
pillar illustrations.

Effortless and
effortful:
belonging.

Alliteration
always
'as a place.

Hyaenas at the
long, booked table!
There're peacocks at the bar.

I'm abandoned by
the bickering. Left to write
my waka – nope, they're back.

A Page Left Blank In Stokes Croft

Some inanity
streaming strong
as if to shield –
Now wait... progressing bass
gives grounding to guitar.

Museless,
but there's music.
Uninspired.

It's because I'm
distracted by the hoops
on the ears outside.

How do you
spell
music?

What's the
literary equivalent
of noise?

How can I write
the way I play
my guitar strings?

Are words only hindrance?
Is this the least
of all expression?

Is the blank page better,
when I'm at a loss for words
and where to lay them?

I don't know
where they come from and...
that means I can't go get them
when they're missing.
They spill from and
over/through the ruins
of the wall, its
rust 'n debris
swept – *erosion* – piece by
ruptured piece by piece.

Fallen – *fall* – foundations
that, uprooted, rend 'n
jaggedly remain. As
inundation covers o'er – *flow* –
the corners and the edges
of those ruins rest but
'neath the riverrun they
fasten – *fasten* – for to
steadfastly persist.
A city certain to succumb,
or to continue?

Leave (?).

Leave (.)?

I don't know...

I don't know..

I don't know.

Creativity's a
severely

From The Table Backed By Octaves In Their Slumber

They move
to watch the people;
the city spreads its sprawl.
Schrödinger's poetry
lay waiting.

On The 16th Of September

Facade, b'hind scaffold scaling,
marks – with arches – out
community,
surrounded by sheet metal
dressed in cult'ral uniform.

Across: Croft past 'n present;
flesh 'n brick beneath
the sun. Jack-
hammer heard behind:
BAH BAH BAH BAH BAH BAH

The road runs riv'ring currents,
coursing crashless swirls
of traffic. Now
a siren song breaks rapid
in jet stream.

On soaring, searing fire's flight
flies th'light of time's
fate-arrow.
Behind the glass, I ask
my mind for words...

The Café Door Opens 'N Closes

Hunching o'er a too-low table
[Breeeeeeeeze.] between the
doorway and the counter/bar,
I sit in soft, surrounded solitude.

Nihon jin seeping in to
sentences [Someday.(?)] that sketch
a stream of consciousness:
from here to then;
from now to there;
from this half-blank page to half-blank others.

When's't? Where's't?
Someday?(.) Nowhere...
Nowhen 'n always!
Now.
Those scattered moments...

Hunching [Breeeeeeze.] over
a too-low table meant for two,
I sit in soft-pastpresent –
solitarily; surrounded.

The Kingfisher

Åpen door –
kann vi, then, enter?
The kingfisher alights the breeze.
(Poe uh) trees in pots by leaves
collected, bound: of grass.

Why... why only one?
For all the wooded-brown:
just you, amongst the stools
'n chairs 'n pews,
stood there, off'ring seat 'n rest
a peachy-pink. The orange-breasted
kingfisher keeps the wall in feathers.

Auld, arched façade –
scaffold-laden – keeps its
guard'yun crow (Or raven?)
sheltered as it, clad in black,
looks down upon sheet-metal tagged
with propelled paint and adorned
with notices in neon. A turquoise
crown and robe in flight:
the kingfisher fishes from a frame.

Åpen, still – "Kann vi ha
lit kaffe?" – and the kingfisher
is hidden from my view
by queue of people.

A sunny Sunday morning
here in Bristol.

The Treasure Of The Pied Crow

You've carried off a locket
(Haven't you?),
which you've twined about your branch,
buds beyond a ring from wintertime:
treasure for your faded-turquoise front.

Pied white 'n dull-green 'n
shim'ring black,
treasuring the trove you've gathered.
A piercing piece of piping
through spring's psychedelia.

Key kept looming 'bout the
drooping blooms, soft-singing
fuchsia – faded – and the colour of a
mango's mostly-ripened flesh.
Heavy's the pate that's perched upon.

You're looking leftward
(Aren't you?),
watching for community to treasure.
See this Greenwich Village
in the turmoil of transition.

Tell us
("Treasure it.")
and see us try,
keep your feet upon
the locket's chain.

Were it,
on its heart-side hinge,
to swing open,
would it hold within
what was lost 'n unpreserved?

Will you leave it
when the petals loose
and the ring slips uncontained?
When the key's no longer kept,
and the branches: barren?

You placed that locket
(Didn't you?)
for to hang there, twined about
the branch you'll – someday – flutter from,
in mem'ry of the treasure left ungathered;
in memory of all we didn't save.

Jazz/Outside Observance Only

Dates 'n dinner-friend-meets –
funfondoo for four, about due more –
aspirating [Wait... they're five.]
out the evening [Dammit.], needing
nought but others – others; others –
opposite 'n side-by-side.
Actreact, re-act, track eyes
about one 'nother/space between.
List': the rolling waves wash o'er
whence the other tidal flowsurge
originates [Ohhhh sinickul!].
A gaze a-gaze across the fold.
The melted cheese all meted out:
they go, they go, they go, they – oh
these two remain; they've sep'rate plans.
A rhythm yet remains 'n, words, demands.

Zappai For A Person Passing

A red hat (wool) upon
a passing moment; light a-righted
'long the optic nerve.

Summer Waned

In summer sunlight,
Autumn gestated/beckoned.

Ears out, nostrils flared:
a dog took in the café.

Upon its linked-leash,
it was held and led away.

Summer waned; Autumn beckoned.

Writing Workers

Separately working swift –
one pony-tailed; one ear-hooped –
with bread 'n fruit 'n coffee.
Bristol bakery.

From A Manufactured Perch, Road-Riverside

The time-frozen, concrete waves
of the surface of the road-kept island
crest with green 'n break upon the
soled shoes of the dancer in the
neon-vest.

He spoke to me,
as we queued in the café
on the river bank.

The fire of the dragon's
protest-flame marks only
its self 'n message.

The riv'ring road is calm;
undanced's the island.

I Saw Three Leaves

I saw three leaves go sailing past
(One summer day, one summer day...)
my view through clean, unbroken glass
(... one summer day, after morning.).

Wither, whence, did the rolling wind
(One summer day, one summer day...)
take up those leaves, bereft their kin
(... one summer day, after morning.)?

Oh, they sailed as a triad fleet
(One summer day, one summer day...)
until one sank to someone's feet
(... one summer day, after morning.).

And all the waves, so full of sound,
(One summer day, one summer day...)
could not keep 'nother from the ground
(... one summer day, after morning.).

And as it wrecked among the cars
(One summer day, one summer day...)
the last leaf was wind-carried far
(... one summer day, after morning.).

Then let us hope that last leaf kept
(One summer day, one summer day...)
its course, while floating on, wind-swept
(... one summer day, after morning.).

I thought of how those leaves sailed past
(One summer day, one summer day...)
my view through clean, unbroken glass
(... one summer day, after morning.).

The Rayd'yo Sings In Snippets

Hello

yes.

[Laughing.]

[Laughter.]

[Heartbeat.]

eve even you

[Heartbeat.]

hahahahahahaha

?yeah...

.yeah...

Ummm jus

[Heartbeat.]

ah ohhh

[Clat[Kuhlink!]ter.]

hahuhuhahuh

[Heart

especially cos we

beat.]

it's a bit weird

[Heartbeat.]

yeah I think

Basically

right.

I mean like

don't actually

...yeah...

[Heartbeat.]

“Flat white?” She asked, leaning slightly forward.

Aayttthurrteefoorpee-em

bihbihbihbihbih

TONK

[Exhaaaale.]

[Inn

it takes sooe mu

hale.]

hahahahaha

!tell mmme wot-tuhdoo

CUHLINK

akkuhlakkuh

[Exhaaaaaaale.]

tiktik

[Innnhale.]

[Headlightlit 'n neon;

mirror mem'ry.]

uh

yeah thass why

hehehuh

?!wot

[Exhaaaaaaaaale.]

kulikkuhlakk

DiDiNK

shhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh

DinK

TUNK

[Innnnnnnnn

BRrrUNK

hale.]

jyusst wuheyeyul heewuz-wawking

[Exhaaaaaa

kuhlakkk

frummis-fayss

aaaaaale.]

?!uhaheheh

DOMPDOMPDOMPDOMP

BrrrruhANKK

DMmmmmHMMmmmmmmTMMMMmmmmmmmm

The infused water stains th'ceramic.

!...BEEEEEEBEEEEEEBEEEEEEBEEEEEE

He hunched toward me, asking: "?"beyenyoospaypur

Zappai In 'N On Stokes Croft

This is where
I wrote
"I Saw Three Leaves".

The road's
become community –
creation.

A ballad
for the place –
it's not released yet.

A dragon,
drenched in its own blue fire.
Grassroots republic.

(Release on Instagram today;
on WordPress after
the others in the queue.)

W'thin Outdoor Café Cold

Down street-strand alleyway,
walking – fluorescent green 'n navy –;
gone now, in the space of
sentences 'n leaf-litter
o'er blowing...

A chain pushed/pulled; again,
the cold wind lifts these leaves
of grass. Avast a moment –
warmth waits in the
gustless silence...

On four paws
padding passed's
the inkless line.

In Café Napolita

I

10.13am

Celtcroon – lamentous song
o'er pink 'n lilac petals,
pressed in layered, longing,
floral, choral keen
on fiddle's wake.

Tattooed timbre – tread beneath
the Gaelic-lillyed call,
your droning dirge converge-
nt 'bout her dark,
tress-fall'n hair.

Aehshia, abundant isle,
in Irish surf caressed...
By red-brick, Werburgh-wall
echoed e'er true's
the valleyed-west.

II

12.52pm

Aft' noon's height,
with its sun-beat rays
arranged around these shadows,
is masked th'moon's
cratered plight beyond
the wisp-white atmosphere.

In melody of
middle-east 'n
north-African call –
the chant of
channeled spirit speaks;
the Aten, westward, falls.

Canvas: green.
The varnished wood waves, grainy.
Wound-wicker wraps its Thursday flowers.

On The First Day Of October

The rippled rings that warp the surface; steam
that rises – risen – for to dissipate.
A wand'ring thief with his compan'yun – thrall;
Canayd'yun poet doth through song relate.
Alit along the current air did fall,
in feath'ry glide, a-whilst my coffee waits,
a crow, from whose descending dance I gleamed
enough of life to inspiration sate.
A-buzz, a bee about the table flit
its form – frenetic – as the crow did stand;
a gurgly child upon his shadow sits
'n laughs at losing it beneath his hands.
In line fourteen a sonnet meets its end
'n I'll sail on around time's riverbend...

Some Blank Verse, In Which I Indirectly State That The Sunlight Fills The Room

Th'eternal throes of Uriel fly – flame –
'cross the deep 'n cold expanse, blackened void
beyond the fence that's facing – tinted blue –
and crest the vap'rous wisps that wend, awash
amongst our wavy sky, its riv'ring stream
of currents pierced by risen beams of gold
a-gath'ring breadth abreast a bright'ning morn.
Now mourned's the passing peace of night, its flight
flown with the scorching licks of star-fire at
its torn 'n frayed heels: "Haste! Away!" the
dread, dire solar disc demands, its killing
claim to consume this oh so brazen rock,
colonised by em'rald life, its reaching
shoots grasping for the furnace – font of heat.
Now slowed's the ancient agony, the star's
screams to the indifference of chaos,
reaching, as it is, the pane of moulded
ash 'n quartz that's 'glyphed in abstract symbols,
tearing colour from the vital fluid.
White's the weary echo th'grants me vision.

Café Napolita Tanka

よるです...
ゆうがたが
ただようます.
はなはうかぶます.
私は？私かなでるます.

でも、何ですか？
あした... と... きょう...

It is night...
The evening
drifts.
The flowers float.
And me? I dance.

But, what is that?
Tomorrow... and... today...

Wand'ring With My Ink-Blue Thoughts

Hill

Lead lagging,
a gallop-bound below;
cranes perched to pierce the skyline.
ののはなはむらさきです,
their purple petals pollinated.

In train-sound waves
the birdsong lingers...

Café

Sun o'er café canvas –
glancing glide; a cascade's grace –
whilst whittling th'air
with sweep-storm waves:
chirp-chatter, cheerful.

Breeze – cool the sweat-soaked tees!
The mind remakes the refused chatter...

Bus

The breeze of movement:
dying.
The heat's held on our lips.
The Roman road to Gloucester
goes on, arch-led.

Eyes only, brow-accomp'nied.
In staggered solitude, we travel...

A Scrap Of Notes-Gone-By

*Sunday, Sunday,
not this Sunday,
but next Sunday*

In one ear 'n out the other –
he walked behind me as he said it.

The Inn On The Green, Bristol.

11th August 2018.

9.30-something pm.

A Second Scrap Of Notes-Gone-By

The present never wavers
on its path
into the past.
(Damn, looks like there's a quiz about to start...
that'll be distracting.)

The Inn On The Green, Bristol.
18th November 2018.
8.11pm.

VII

From Sleep

Concert calling 'cross
the city late-lit, soundful night –
the soundwaves wash 'n wake, moon-bidden.
From entropying tea, I gather sleep.
From sleep, I gain the risen sun.

A Last Request

There was no melancholy leading to this. It just came to me, is all.

Make of me
(when all that can
be used to save's
been taken) then a
compost – 'to the
grass, the lions;
parent, to the
deep black sky –
and nurture in it
nutrients to nestle
'bout a seed.

Plant me (Get
permission, first!)
to look across the harbour –
either where the day begins
or where it ended – and
now watch to see if
there's a girl-child
conjuring 'n clearing out the mist,
her poise bright and her eyes
lit like the river.

Let me/it,
at last, then, rise,
buffeted by sound-waves
that bring the bellrings
sailing past, on through
the blue-backed sun;
trav'ling 'neath th'remembered
light of stars.

Make sure that the
serpent keeps it safe
from being branded by
the panicked, pious, insecure
antithesis to freedom;
let a rebel angel
burn through blaspheme-proofed walls,
exposing the life inside to meaning.

Leave it/me at
last to live a
second time remembered –
bereft the streaming consciousness;
in place, a clear, still lake –
and find the riv'ring remnants now
reflecting from its surface, blue,
a spirit channeled through
once-written words.