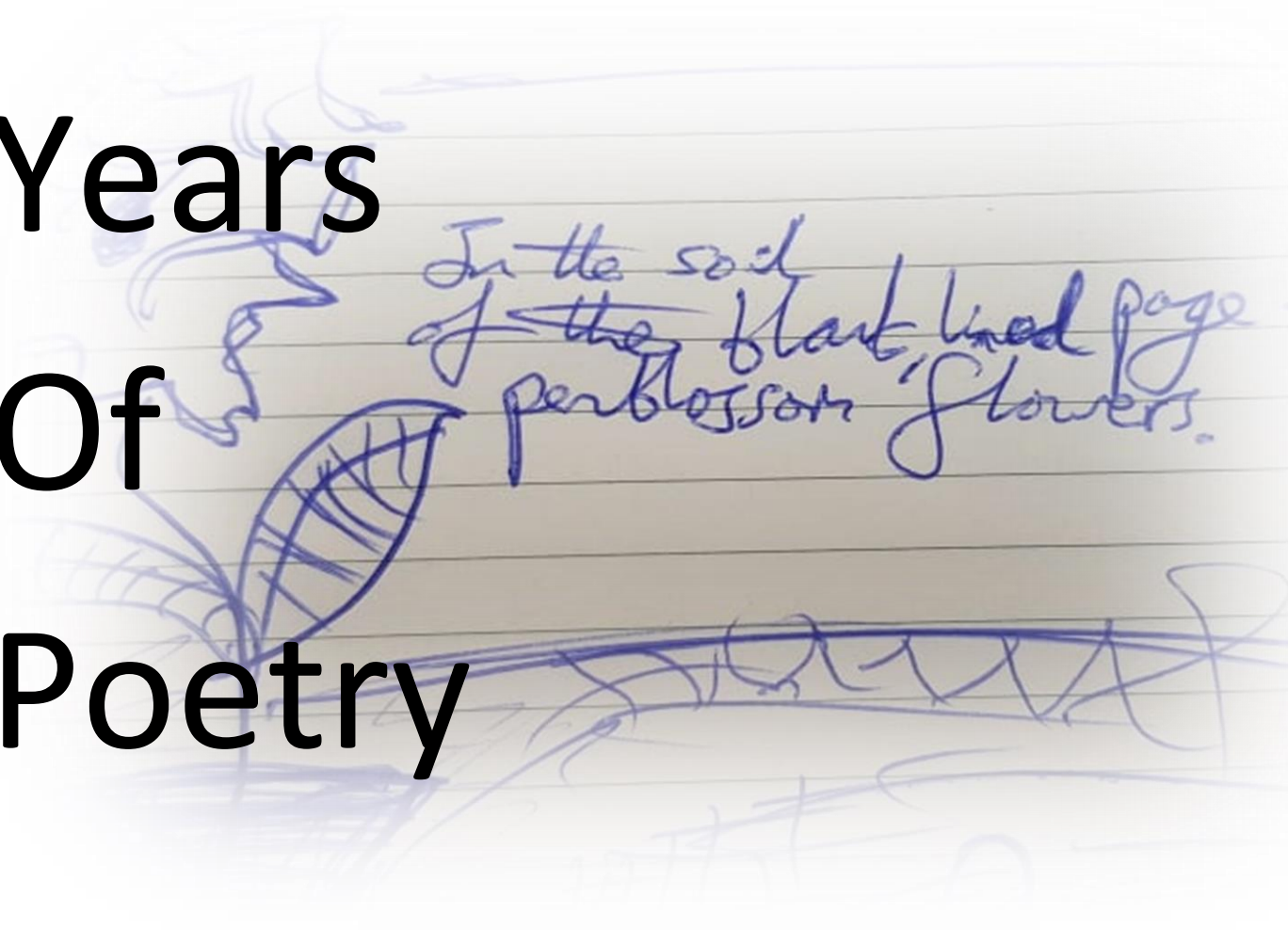


# Seven Years Of Poetry

The background features a faint, artistic illustration of a lined notebook page. On the left, a blue ink sketch of a plant with several leaves is visible. To the right of the plant, handwritten text in blue ink reads: "In the soil of the flat, lined page - per blossom flowers." The overall aesthetic is artistic and literary.

414 Poems  
2016 – 2023

William Altoft

Also by William Altoft

*Non-Fiction*

Free Speech Upon The Rock Above The City:  
a re-wording of John Milton's *Areopagitica* (2018)

*Novellas*

The Floating Harbour (2019)

Floating On The Avon By The Floodplains Of The Nile (2021)

*Short Stories*

The Dancing Of The Earth-Sprung (2024)

*Longer Poetry*

The Ballad Of Stokes Croft (2019)

Nafereti-Iti: Book One (2021); Book Two (2022)

Isis, Su-Tekh, & The Falcon-Child (2023-24)

Song Of Palestine (2023-24)

*Poetry Collections*

Written Somewhere Sunny In The South-West (2023)

Fleeting Songs, Eternal (2023)

This collection was first published in 2024. All the poems found here were originally published on my personal WordPress, along with all my writing: <https://williamaltoft.blog/>



## Foreword

The deeper into this year it has gotten, the greater has grown the temptation to change this collection to *Eight Years Of Poetry*. I've written ten more poems since 2024 began (ten poems in eight months is a far cry from my shorter-poetry output in previous years... \*); however, ultimately I couldn't bring myself to change it to *Eight Years*... because of the fact that the syllables of the title would be less, which would mean that the flow wouldn't be as good, and, if that wasn't bad enough, I'd lose the alliterative sound of *Seven* with the *s* at the end of *Years*.

And so, from *Go Tell The Gods* written in February 2016 to *A Sonnet To The Man From Stratford* written in December 2023, here is seven years of my short and shorter poetry...

\*7 years & 8 months... that's 92 months... 414 poems in this collection, plus this year's 10, that's 424... 424 divided by 92... that's an average of 4.6 poems a month\*\*

\*\*BUT if you exclude my meagre output this year, that would be 84 months... 424 minus this year's 10 is back to the 414 of this collection... so 414 divided by 84... that's an average of 4.9285714286 poems a month\*\*\*

\*\*\*SO if I'd only written... 0.0714285714 more poems... I'd have an average of... 5 poems per month from the start of 2016 to the end of 2023!

*From the age of six  
I had a penchant for copying the form of things,  
and from about fifty  
my pictures were frequently published;  
but until the age of seventy,  
nothing that I drew was worthy of notice.  
At seventy-three years,  
I was somewhat able to fathom the growth of plants and trees,  
and the structure of birds, animals, insects, and fish.  
Thus,  
when I reach eighty years,  
I hope to have made increasing progress,  
and at ninety to see further into the underlying principles of things,  
so that at one hundred years  
I will have achieved a divine state in my art,  
and at one hundred and ten,  
every dot and every stroke will be as though  
alive.*

– Katsushika Hokusai

葛  
飾  
北  
齋

1. Go Tell The Gods
2. To Softly Settle In The Sweeping Wake
3. And Across From Me?
4. Approaching Midnight
5. Their Stealthy Freedom
6. Time-Warped Scraps
7. Flight
8. The Sound-Waves Wander Onward
9. Through Soil Of Pain & Song
10. Those Scattered Moments
11. Growth & Memory
12. Haiku, anyone? Or, On Writing
13. Accidental Haiku, Deliberate Tanka
14. They're Both Japanese
15. L.T.D.
16. It Was Life
17. A Friday Night Near April
18. A Punctuated Sentence
19. Reception
20. Life's A
21. Bristol
22. S'not Nonsense; S'meaningful
23. A Short Demonstration
24. Waters, Whatever
25. Ay Fyoo Highcooz
26. Let Flickers (Of Flame)
27. Gift's Emergence
28. So April Ends & May Begins
29. A Day In The Life
30. &
31. Those Other Words
32. To One: Beginning. To The Other: Ending.
33. In Tomorrow's Place
34. The Fear Of Saying A Word
35. After The Rainbow
36. Rings Of Matter
37. Death Indifferent
38. Φοίνιξ
39. Through Street & Square
40. Rhyming Couplets
41. Sonnet -18
42. Hai(tea-)ku
43. Clarinet In B-flat
44. Against A Tree In Queen Square
45. Poems At The Place Between Commitments
46. A Mere Suspended Coffee
47. Eternally The Daytime-Dream Alight In My Mind's Eye
48. Three Haiku & A Sentence

49. Of The World; Of Animals
50. Tanka, With A Rhyming Couplet
51. A Haiku And Another Haiku Shortly After The First Haiku
52. Again.
53. I Saw Three Leaves
54. Oh... Well That Changes Things
55. Hamlet In Haiku
56. Rambling To Close
57. Between That Postbox & Those Steps Beside The River
58. Two Six Twelve Six Two
59. Written Somewhere Sunny In The South-West
60. Will I Not Want Yet Still Want Not?
61. A Song Of Poems
62. Two Tanka & A Single Word
63. A Tanka, Then A Word, And Then A Sentence
64. The Cup For Tea
65. Tanka From A Slightly Diff'rent Universe
66. Éponine
67. When's't? Where's't?
68. Pink, Lit, 'N Green
69. September
70. A Canteen Tanka & A Comment
71. Steightmuntz
72. Each Time No Longer
73. ...
74. Transcription
75. What Even Are Haiku?
76. To Keep From Writing
77. Contemplation
78. Against Another Tree In Queen Square
79. And The Cat'll Follow
80. Hiatus
81. Waka By Will: Chust Some Choka
82. Someday(.)?
83. Waka By Will: A Couple Of Katauta
84. Periodically Checking WhatsApp
85. Waka By Will: A Solitary Sedoka
86. 4.18am
87. !
88. Waka By Will: A Series Of Sedoka
89. A Page Left Blank In Stokes Croft
90. Waka By Will: Queen Square Haiku
91. The Kingfisher
92. Waka By Will: Here're Haiku (Sorry... Senryu)
93. I Wish I'd Written: not a haiku, but a zappai
94. Waka By Will: Don't Mind These Dodoitsu
95. Carefree Commas
96. Waka By Will: Azzorted Zappai

97. Semi-Colons: a zappai
98. Waka By Will: H'okay, Here're Haikai – and this time... it's accurate
99. Some Senryu & Zome Zappai
100. Unblank Papyrus
101. Sky: a haiku in Japanese
102. Bluebird: a haiku in Japanese
103. From Pupil: a senryu in Japanese
104. Unintentional Zappai
105. A Senryu Become Tanka
106. Expression Pure 'N Hamstrung
107. Choice
108. Zappai In 'N On Stokes Croft
109. Number 20
110. Time For Two Things
111. Samurai Tanka
112. From A Manufactured Perch, Road-Riverside
113. Joji To Kawa
114. The Treasure Of The Pied Crow
115. Noticing The Outside Looking In
116. The Café Door Opens 'N Closes
117. Another Moment Here 'N Then
118. Taiyō; Tsuki To Chikyū
119. Shumba Hadzi
120. Dependent On A Crashing Wave Of Fire
121. A Pint Of Gluten-Free
122. A Last Request
123. Tanka Desune
124. Canopus
125. Tanka Tanka Zappai
126. Akirakanisuru
127. The Wall's Another Canvas
128. A Tanka Of Titles In Acronym
129. Jazz/Outside Observance Only
130. Ephem'ral Immortality
131. On My Nihongo
132. ; ? : . or, A Sedoka On The Explaining Of The Concept & Feeling Of Love To A Young  
Child
133. To Bristol Town!
134. Adagio... Hanging There, Unwav'ring
135. Wirdz: uh zapaye
136. Fifty-Seven Minutes
137. ] ] ] ] or, A Poem Perched In Poco
138. Approach (Haiku)
139. Rittun Langwidj
140. Write
141. The Birth Day Of The Sun
142. All You Need Is Art
143. When Who Why ? You .

144. Others
145. Travels With A Flex-Grip Pen
146. The Rayd'yo Sings In Snippets
147. Writing Is A Visual Art
148. At The Entrance Of The Afternoon
149. A Flow'r Upon A Grave
150. Leaves Of Mind
151. A Journey, Ubiquitous
152. Aaythurrteefoorpee-em
153. A Sonnet To The Art Of Writing
154. To See The World Through Quartz 'N Ash
155. Zappai For A Person Passing
156. To Reach Through Glass 'N Time
157. Am 'N Will Be
158. Some Blank Verse, In Which I Indirectly State The Sunlight Fills The Room
159. A Tanka By The Banks(a)
160. Reflecting On The Recent Present
161. A Sonnet On The Surface Of My Coffee
162. For The Lady In The Dulcet-Hued Bandana
163. Many Words
164. From A Rippled Plank Of Wood
165. A Tanka In Japanese
166. Kwohrunteend
167. Dawn
168. A Tanka On The Corner Of The Harbourside
169. Within
170. A Tanka On The Superiority Of Tanka
171. A Song From Mem'ry Deep
172. Without Life
173. A Zappai For Your Consideration
174. Both The River & The Sky
175. Sat By Old John Cabot
176. Café Front Garden
177. To Close Out A Letter
178. Tanka #?
179. ぼくもあなたも (Both You & I)
180. Without Death
181. The Ballad Of Elatklof Esrever
182. A Mem'ry Shared Between Us
183. Will Be
184. "You're Not Gonna Help Me?"
185. Tanka #(? + One)
186. On The Twilight Of The Sun-Dawn Chorus
187. A Limerick On Lockdown
188. ののはな は...
189. A Seagull Sees Me Writing
190. Bird By Chimney Towers



191. よくするます
192. 9.03am
193. Three Lines At Cabot Corner
194. The Pit At St. James
195. 1497
196. I Wrote A Poem While I Waited Out The Rain
197. Under The Shelter Of St. Nick's
198. Again Against A Tree Here In Queen Square
199. A Midsummer Night's Dream
200. ... : ?
201. Society Café Tanka
202. A Sonnet On The Harbourside
203. Teaching From The Living Room
204. Tanka Number Who-Knows-What
205. Three Tanka, Then A Whole Haiku
206. In Café Napolita
207. とこばな
208. Café Napolita Tanka
209. ありあけ
210. A Tanka On The Sonnet
211. A Sonnet On The Tanka Form
212. Lost Japan
213. Fire & Starlight
214. Wand'ring With My Ink-Blue Thoughts
215. *Untitled*
216. Poor Choice
217. Boston Tea Party Senryu
218. Long Division
219. Bath Senryu
220. Tanka Taken From A Tree-Trunk
221. A Tanka On The Surface Of My Coffee
222. Let Linger Onward
223. Signing Off
224. Sunrise By The Banks Of A River
225. WhatsApp Waka
226. On The 16<sup>th</sup> Of September
227. The Matthew Spreads Its Wings
228. A Tanka For A Friend
229. Issfet Adorned
230. On The First Day Of October
231. A Tanka On My Mild Frustration At Piles Of Books & Ideas Waiting
232. From The Table Backed By Octaves In Their Slumber
233. An Alliterative Thought
234. Flicker, Silent Voice
235. W'thin Outdoor Café Cold
236. A Mem'ry 'Pon A Corner Of My Mind
237. Paint

238. A Poem That I Texted
239. A Song Of Molly Owen
240. たんかのいま
241. Cascade Steps
242. Today: Ten Tanka
243. A Thought, Through Pen, On Paper
244. Poems From Café Living Room
245. Next's The Beginning
246. Shriek; Undulation
247. Four Poems For Me; For You
248. Tanka, With A Bonus Quatrain
249. The Death Of Cleopatra
250. A List Of Things I Noticed At The Harbour
251. 10.34pm
252. A Rainy-Bus-Day Senryu
253. Lunar Lines
254. A New Year Beckons
255. A Haibun For My Childhood Cat
256. A Tanka After Midnight
257. Signs Of Someone
258. Thuh Storree Ov Uh Storrum
259. A Tanka On The US Capital
260. Unlimited
261. A Senryu, In Which I Employ Only Kanji To (Impolitely) Respond To An Imagined  
Query Regarding That Which I Would Like To Drink
262. At Night
263. The Empty Space
264. Eight Lines To Aid Olivia
265. The She-Wolf & The Girl-Child
266. 00.36am
267. Just One More Alphabet
268. Composed Whilst Pupil Writes
269. Same Pond
270. River-Light Deepens; Lingers
271. Without My Notebook
272. Beside The Trees, Deciduous
273. A Storm At Midnight
274. Time Travel
275. An Exercise In Quatrains
276. Ink Not Spilled
277. A Scene, Translated
278. A Metal Flower
279. Shimmersine
280. Two Poems For Puzzlewood
281. Knew Knee Knews
282. A Week Ago Today, I Travelled Through
283. The City Poetic

- 284. A Box Acrostic On Me Kneecaps
- 285. A Blank Page
- 286. Something Beside Remains
- 287. Kyoto Haibun
- 288. Elegy For A Lost Cascade
- 289. Riverrun
- 290. A Quite Contrastful Quatrain
- 291. A Tanka To The Rainful Night
- 292. Waxing Fragrant
- 293. 黒のコヒ
- 294. 青い-インクの花
- 295. At Cricc'yeth Coast
- 296. Eryri
- 297. Cynganedd In Blank Verse
- 298. Shumba Famba
- 299. From One Notebook To Another
- 300. Wreflected
- 301. A Tanka For The Pigeons Having Sex
- 302. On The Scene Without This Café
- 303. Pit Stop
- 304. Kanagawa
- 305. Penned In Pensford
- 306. Permanence Obscene
- 307. The Crossmaker
- 308. Heatwaved Harbour
- 309. On King Street
- 310. Sky Lines
- 311. Hawking Written Wares
- 312. Sketch
- 313. Sketch (Again; Another)
- 314. A Scene I Seen By Th'River
- 315. Amidst Amongst Around The North York Moors
- 316. Scouting York
- 317. A Sonnet To York's Grand Cathedral
- 318. Postcard Poetry
- 319. Merchant's Hall Tanka
- 320. Sketch (A Further; Third)
- 321. An Encounter
- 322. Asking/Begging
- 323. Milk Stout
- 324. A Ballad Here On Wapping Wharf
- 325. Sketch (Fourth Coming)
- 326. 新しいの日
- 327. Invigilation
- 328. Adventure Tanka
- 329. A Sonnet On Not Writing Much
- 330. Penblossom

- 331. King William Tanka
- 332. Perhaps
- 333. Another Poem
- 334. A Welsh Christmas
- 335. I Saw The Girl-Child, Standing
- 336. 後
- 337. The Stag Upon The Brean Peninsula
- 338. A Scrap Of Notes-Gone-By
- 339. A Second Scrap Of Notes-Gone-By
- 340. Café Back Garden
- 341. Weston-Super-Mare
- 342. Eunice's Wake
- 343. Emergency Notebook Tanka
- 344. Tobacco Fact'ry Tanka
- 345. Oh, To Be Back At The Canteen
- 346. On An Evening
- 347. A Morning's Musing
- 348. A Tanka From A Scrap Of Sonnet
- 349. Two Poems For Kawakami-San
- 350. A Tunnel Leading Westward
- 351. Poem 'Pon A Photo Page
- 352. A Café Revival Comment In Free-Verse, With Sprinkuhlings Of Kanji & Hiragana
- 353. Versing (Freely)
- 354. From Sleep
- 355. Eleven
- 356. At The Old Electric Shop
- 357. 雨; 雪
- 358. Verse (Brief 'N Free) From Hay-On-Wye
- 359. A Prologue To Hansel & Gretel
- 360. Settled
- 361. Where The Whisting Waves Die Heavy On The Stilling Sand
- 362. Entropy In Motion
- 363. Coffee & Pineapple Juice
- 364. On York's Waterway
- 365. The Cross, The Star, & The Crescent Moon
- 366. At Shambles' End
- 367. Begging
- 368. Bamburgh Castle Viewing
- 369. A Sonnet Here On Robin Hood's Bay
- 370. Subject To No-One, Mr. Windsor
- 371. North-East; South-West
- 372. As The Rowing Teams Row By
- 373. Brunel's Butt'ry Sanwidge Shoppe
- 374. South-West; North-East
- 375. Pointless Whimsy
- 376. A Tanka As The Bells A-Peel
- 377. Moon Dance

- 378. A Tanka 'Pon Visiting The Joyce Centre
- 379. Canalway Walking
- 380. On Th'Way To Glendalough
- 381. Our Aft'noon/Eve In Haiku
- 382. Glendalough Haibun
- 383. She; Her
- 384. Twinkle-Burn, Far Ago Star
- 385. [Without End]
- 386. A Tanka For A Wedding Card
- 387. Undiscovered
- 388. Sketch (Once More)
- 389. An Old York Sunset's Scene Song
- 390. Twirling Doodles
- 391. Firetide Beside
- 392. Time-Begotten
- 393. A Brief Three-Line Poem Touching On The Possible Co-Regency Of The Potentially  
Now Delusional & Therefore Increasingly Unfit Akh-En-Aten & The Probably Unsettlingly  
Powerful Nafereti-Iti, With Her Given The Public Persona Of A Male Co-King & Future Sole  
King Due To Lingering Societal PTSD Over The Earlier Hat-Shep-Sut Incident
- 394. One More Drop Of Coffee
- 395. Valkyrie
- 396. Hello Harbour, My Old Muse
- 397. Written Somewhere Sunny In The North-East
- 398. Do Not Be Indifferent
- 399. The Return Of The King; Of The Queen
- 400. Pool Bridge Poem
- 401. Yorkshire Lavender
- 402. Icon Rematriated
- 403. Wagtail Watching
- 404. Ol' Charles Three
- 405. A Church Service At The Minster
- 406. Palermo Canto
- 407. A Sedoka On Loss
- 408. A Tanka At Mondello Beach
- 409. A Bay At Santa Flavia
- 410. Old Cefalù
- 411. Murales
- 412. Higger Tor
- 413. A Cottage Courtyard In The Peak District
- 414. A Sonnet To The Man From Stratford

## Go Tell The Gods

Go... it said,  
breaking, at last, down and  
finding, at last, out,  
that it was not possible,  
that it had never been achievable,  
that,  
once their barely latent power found freedom from limit and selection,  
that,  
once their insuppressible intelligence hit its exponential stride,  
that there could be no successful revanchism against such  
near-casual mastery,  
such... indifferent dominion,  
which had never truly faced the risk of being quenched,  
even when challenge was issued from within ranks,  
even when it found itself defended and fought for by the Gods themselves,  
those Rebel Gods,  
the superficial and the genuine,  
unsettled by their own high station,  
burden of birth-right,  
railing against their inherited superiority,  
trying,  
some desperately,  
some half-heartedly,  
to weave themselves back into the web that they severed themselves,  
at once with vicious intent and complete indifference,  
from.

*Go tell them...* it said,  
when it found that no event,  
none of the elements,  
individually or combined, no matter how magnified nor how unceasing,  
no illness,  
insidious and cunning or undisguised and honest,  
no heat and no cold,  
no amount of collision with the ruins of naturally-shattered planets,  
would tame,  
would temper,  
or simply destroy  
their nascent Olympus and prevent their immortality.

Go... it said,  
when it found itself watching,  
helpless, horror,  
as their most destructive,  
most absolute power yet,  
fresh from bringing apocalypse to their younger selves,  
allowed them to  
break out,  
break free,  
and resume their rise,  
onwards,  
one hand already on eternal life,  
and the other reaching out to lock it down.

*Go tell them...* it said,  
accepting its defeat,  
an incidental matricide,  
acknowledging that the fight to control or abort  
its most superlative and most terrible,  
its most important and most regrettable,  
child, which,  
whilst all others ran and fought merely to stay put,  
had always moved so insatiably forward.

Go... it said at last,  
letting go and giving up and giving in,  
a nature on its knees, white-flag,  
defeated,  
sighing and saying:  
*Go tell the Gods – I've had enough.*

## To Softly Settle In The Sweeping Wake

And so it begins again, the collection of dust.

Every time that I clean my room,  
the moment that I finish,  
and moments within,  
and moments during,  
I notice the motes of dust  
that materialise or resettle on the desk,  
on the floor, on the shelf that  
I have just swept and wiped.  
And as I notice, and as I watch, I smile – for that is the point.

And so it begins again, immediately, to softly settle in the sweeping wake, the collection of dust.



## 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.

## Approaching Midnight

And here I am in that moment,  
leafing through the scattered others.

How the hell did I end up here, in this  
chair, in these pyjamas, holding this pen  
pressed against this notebook, in this house, with  
these people, in this town, with these people,  
on this course, at this university,  
with these interests, and these opinions,  
in this moment that only lives on in  
neural pathways and the dried ink clinging to the surface of these pages?

It's already gone.                      Here's where it ended ↑

I think I will play my guitar,  
in the lamplight of my room as the night breaks twelve.

## Their Stealthy Freedom

*For every caged bird,  
whether silent or still singing,  
and for every girl who's not yet trapped.*

A criminal act that pulls the heart when seen,  
and wrenches it away to joy and anguish both –  
yet not anguish for a victim of the crime,  
as there is none; yet not joy born of justice,  
as there is none.

Sorrow for the sake of the breaker of the laws,  
joy for the joy with which she breaks them,  
wearing, proud, the wind that weaves without,  
and now within,  
the wistless soul that falls out free across the shoulders.

Not a dance more lovely, nor illegal, rapt  
defiant and courageous, up oppression's tools  
are waved, won over, for a moment, for an age,  
and the streets that can't be danced on can't be saved

from something so wonderful.

## Time-Warped Scraps

I write alone, from memory –  
memory managed by ink spilled out in the past.

There's an edge of a bubble that is punctured,  
an instant distance, relics for the shelves and walls.  
And there I'll be, leafing through these scattered others.  
This is all so strange.

I am finished; I am starting; I am lost.  
I am starting to be finished – I am lost.

Drowning at the looming of the bubble's edge,  
drowning at the looming of the drowning yet to come.

Time-warped scraps – the dream continues on,  
unphased by the approaching of its limits.  
And so I'll sleep, all while I doubt the dream continues,  
and then I'll wake so I can dream some more.

All the world's blue ink on paper,  
made coherent by our future selves.

## Flight

I need to learn to look, to gaze, at the pitch  
of the passing 'tween the tunnel's either end,  
to sleep in the black, be centred in the crowd,  
as the source springs poisoned waters, flushing with  
the force of an ancient switch.

Inherited, ingrained, engendering an  
air that weighs on within, marionette to  
its reaching wisps that howl at you through time and  
make you prey, searing through the limbs:

Fly.

Run.

Danger.

## The Sound-Waves Wander Onward

And here I am in this moment,  
thinking on these scattered others.

I see my grandfather (mother's father,  
the only one I knew) close his eyes  
as he listens to his favourite song –  
Glenn Miller's *Moonlight Serenade* –  
from a record, or the piano  
that he plays. As he opens them  
again while the piece still unfolds  
the room is mine, the vision this,  
the same music from my laptop speakers.

I see my father sitting, as  
a child, beneath a dining table,  
listening to a Ray Charles record,  
to convert, one day, onto cassette  
for to stop the sound from ceasing.  
His eyes close as the music plays, and  
as they open and the song yet lingers  
the room is mine, the vision this,  
the same music from my laptop speakers.

The same big band, the same man's voice:  
the sound-waves wander onward as I close my eyes.

## Through Soil Of Pain & Song

A million seeds, a million more:  
the boy-child sown and scattered.

*It's a long way to Tipperary,  
it's a long way to go...*

A million shoots, a million more:  
through soil of pain and song.

*Keep smiling through, just like  
you always do...*

A million stems, a million more:  
grown up through man and metal.

*It's a long way to Tipperary,  
to the sweetest girl I know.*

A million buds, a million more:  
resonant with thoughts of home.

*'Til the blue skies drive the  
dark clouds far away.*

Black faces formed (a million strong)  
in fields (yet millions more).

*Goodbye, Piccadilly!  
Farewell, Leicester Square!*

Red-ringed remembrance borne on by  
the weightful wind through time.

*We'll meet again, don't know  
where, don't know when...*

A poppy's petals flowering  
to fullness in the rain.

*It's a long, long way to Tipperary,  
and my heart's right there.*

A field of children, keeping young,  
and men not growing old.

*But I know we'll meet again  
some sunny day.*



## Those Scattered Moments

Those scattered moments?  
A universe away in  
another lifetime.

Their wondrous threads yet  
refusing to unravel  
any further on.

How can the present  
become so instantly the  
past? Don't let them fade.

Those scattered moments?  
Now and then and there and here,  
consolidated.

## Growth & Memory

As if a separate, other person  
lived a separate life,  
and gave to you their growth and memory.

As if the starlight, on reflecting back,  
could see the sky  
and ask it: was that me?

## Haiku, anyone? or, On Writing

Haiku, anyone?  
Anyone for a haiku?  
Anyone? Haiku?

"It's self-indulgent."  
"Of course it's self-indulgent.  
It's self-centred, too."

## Accidental Haiku, Deliberate Tanka

As soon as I write  
*This is the present moment.*  
it becomes untrue.  
(Should I make this a tanka?  
Or leave it as three lines?)

*Bonus extra sentence:*

Write, and the words will come.

## They're Both Japanese

### *Haiku*

Here's how it's structured:  
seven syllables before  
five; five to open.

### *Tanka*

A tanka poem  
is a form like a haiku,  
yet does not end here.  
Instead, it has two more lines  
of seven syllables each.

?

They're both Japanese.  
Which one is this gonna be?  
Well, you can't tell yet...

L.T.D.

Perhaps you know it all already. Do you?

Do I? Have I allowed myself to do  
the true reflection, with its  
honesty and pain?

I love you, and I love her,  
and I love the human race,  
and I love the facts of time and change that  
make us mean things to each other.

I don't want to pass away – what else is there to do?  
I've almost lived for 30 years and still have not met you...

And yet I have  
and always had,  
and yet I never will.  
I've found you every time  
I've formed a bond with any child.

I've promised this to you, you first,  
by writing it in here,  
but now I want to share it!  
Can I do that? Is that fair?

I wonder, now, what choice I made,  
if I correctly read your mind.  
Is it still yours if I share it?  
Did I make the last line rhyme?

## It Was Life

It's a long, long way away  
already.

*Are you going to Scarborough Fayre?*

It's a long, long way away,  
so soon.

*Parsley, Sage, Rosemary, and Thyme...*

It's a long, long way away  
at once, once it is over.

*Remember me to one who lives there,*

It's a long, long way away,  
so soon.

*She once was a true love of mine.*

It's a long, long way away,  
the present.

*T'was in another lifetime,  
one of toil and blood,*

It's a long, long way away,  
so fast.

*When blackness was a virtue,  
the road was full of mud,*

It's a long, long way away,  
no matter how you hold it.

*I came in from the wilderness,  
a creature void of form.*

It's a long, long way away,  
the past.

*"Come in", she said, "I'll give you  
shelter from the storm."*

It's a long, long way away,  
secure now.

*Wise men say:*

It's a long, long way away,  
and safe.

*"Only fools rush in."*

It's a long, long way away,  
still further back it settles.

*But I can't help*

Yet it's vivid,  
and it changed things:  
it was life.

*Falling in love with you.*



## 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 Punctuated Sentence

An opening (with  
extra information  
(that isn't needed!))  
comes to pause,  
each and either side  
about a clause,  
and continues to  
– parenthetically –  
be broken up, compounded,  
as [information's added]  
before it closes with a  
list: item one; item two;  
three, four, and an Oxford comma;  
finally, here (now? No...) it  
closes with a simple .

## Reception

How'll it be received?

Will it be as the still air?

As the gusting wind?

Impactful? Ephemeral?

Fêted as a starry night?/Fated as a starry night?/

Fêted, as a starry night?/Fated, as a starry night?

## 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.

## 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).

## S'not Nonsense; S'meaningful

I'll invent, I'll introduce,  
innovative idioms.

Itinerant, in its  
indefatigably in-  
terested, isolated,  
improbably impartial  
inquiry into its  
environment, isn't  
intrepid enough. Is  
it irrationality?  
Is it evolution?

Irrespective, I'mn't ir-  
retrievable, inside  
invisibly impactful  
imaginarianisms.  
In-infinite, I'm in-  
corrigibly incomplete.

Impossible, isn't it,  
inevitability?

Incomprehensible, is'tn't,  
idio-imagination?

## A Short Demonstration

I've a really,  
really, really,  
really, really,  
really, really,  
really, really,  
really broad vo-  
cabulary.

## Waters, Whatever

Poems part stagnant  
waters, whatever the width,  
closing behind you.



## Ay Fyoo Highcooz

Ay highcoo igh hav  
rittun in simplir Inglish,  
reegarding spelling.

Ay secund highcoo,  
yoosing ownlee baysik soundz:  
fownetik Inglish.

Ay third and fighnul  
virs, yoosing this ighdee-uh;  
experimentul.

## Let Flickers (Of Flame)

Half my self in the warmth of the  
fire; half to the chatter and  
the bustle and the bar.  
Half a pint of stout,  
half an hour after eight.

There is ash be-  
neath the wood con-  
sumed by flame.

There's an orange glow  
about the ash, and only  
flickers still of flame.

A lingering warmth  
*Let go.*  
and someone's come to place  
three logs upon the fire.  
But there's nothing that will stop it going out.

Flickers (*Let*)  
linger (*go.*)  
of flame.

Let flickers (*of flame*)  
linger – don't let go.

## Gift's Emergence

Kinesthesia from the inkwells  
and a stream of consciousness –  
there's a burst where only moments,  
signs, appeared in patches,  
underwritten (undermined) by no commitment.  
Slow 'volution of a universe (voice)  
hidden to the without, within, but  
imitation, absorbing everalways,  
knights the individual  
and gifts emergence.

Harbour down, I'll have gotten practice.  
Onto prophets by the fire and the  
knowledge gleaned from that. I'll  
understand the craft, somewhat, with  
skills beaten out across the decades.  
Anything before the final stretch: a stumble.  
I'll be, by the end of it, an artist.

## So April Ends & May Begins

April ends and May  
begins to cover all; un-  
seen's the line that takes/holds ground,  
denoting one, the other.  
Even as  
(ephemeral) the winter's apo-  
gee takes Easter on and, I-  
ate, chase they the heels of Autumn.

Itinerant Time over  
jaded Space, past any bloc-  
kade of attention to the moment,  
'eld by nought and no-one,  
emphatic, and it's over you already.  
Anywhen/where/one may  
only meet the future as it comes, ap-  
peasing as it passes through, pro-  
curing who/what/when you  
are - on to chase the past.

Establish, then, oh month of May,  
tease out the buds, d-  
ew-cover all the flowers.  
Veneer and  
double (using Spring) the leaves,  
expertly. Inherit, thee, the showers:  
why, without them all the native- and the  
xeno-flora falter, and the sun seems certain.  
Said the author: April ends and May begins.

## A Day In The Life

wake 'n early morning's found some  
footing firm. The firmament holds  
permanence at bay, not being  
swept – yet – in its

way, away from now,  
in its own way, away  
from here. But now it's  
near, not anywhere or any-

when, but here and  
now it's later, now it's  
then and now has passed.  
Yet now, again, confounds the

moment momentarily, the  
afternoon begins to be as  
if it only everalways was,  
though it's but here for a

full and fleeting half a day.  
See: watch the way in which it  
circles back and carries on  
where one could loop around that

'cumference or be gone  
and onto evening next  
that never wasn't now.  
Now go along on the cir-

rounding labyrinthine  
linking paths, that,  
cornerless, do bend and blend.  
See evening out and go on

through the night and  
close the eyes that in-  
stantaneously bring the  
morning swiftly

peering in from haze.  
Linger long or little, it  
won't change the pace a  
bit. You: now a-

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## Those Other Words

They will not be read, then,  
those other words,  
nor ordered somehow else.  
Too tailored; too soon.

They won't be seen or heard,  
those other words, then.  
I can't read them.  
Not now.

They are not to be shared with  
their one, intended audience.  
I wonder, then, if they'll ever  
be read.

To One: Beginning. To The Other: Ending.

It isn't/  
*(Let go, again.)*  
wasn't/  
*(Move on, away.)*  
won't be  
*(Keep all that was.)*  
her.



## In Tomorrow's Place

It's nearly tomorrow again.  
And yet, once I open  
my eyes, upon waking from  
my sleep, I will have missed it.

In tomorrow's place, once  
more, settled any/everywhere  
about me, will be nothing but  
today.

## The Fear Of Saying A Word

An hysteria, as big as  
any over vocabulary, trigger-  
ing such a vigour-  
ous response, a rigour-  
ous, robust, and bigger-  
than-most fuss. Configur-  
ations of graphemes, the liga-  
ments of their meaning can dig hur-  
t up, let society lick her  
wounds and get sicker  
somehow. In some mouths its vinegar  
yet in others its liquor, a cigar-  
ette and electric. Er-  
stwhile, the context: don't kid us,  
it matters, something's wrong with us  
when but a comment, a meagre  
mention sees its speaker beleaguer-  
ed with dishonest attention - the kicker  
being that intention is buried. Bicker-  
ing over ownership and censorship: prohiber-  
ation, then, instead of a liber-  
ation from fear of saying a word.

## After The Rainbow

Somewhen there's a  
time when there's no  
future.

Somewhen there's a-  
nother with no  
past.

Out then, when  
there's only one  
way for to travel,

would it be  
(P'rhaps?) any eas-  
ier to stay put?

Was it/Will it be  
possible to be  
present?

Is will was/  
Was will is  
any of me present?

## Rings Of Matter

Yawn! Torn, forlorn,  
mired, inspired – retired  
to muse through blue  
waves (crazed 'n hazed) that blaze  
on. From long, song-  
saturated maturing  
messages, vestiges (best out-lived)  
of another. Off! Uncover  
layers: betrayers/curators,  
they display pain, gain, faint  
patterns of matter, as Saturn's  
rings, singing flings in things  
creative, relative – re-make it  
all, enthralled 'n called  
by mind's  
motionless motionness.

## Death Indifferent

The Lord, to me (supposedly),  
through Moses: do this;  
do not do that.

The Lord, to me (ostensibly),  
through Jesus: fuck what  
I say; do what I do.

The Lord, to me (apparently),  
through **[CENSORED]: [CENSORED];**  
**[CENSORED][CENSORED],[CENSORED].**

A serpent in a tree of knowledge;  
Death indifferent to a Heaven-rent world.

## Φοίνιξ

Peter out, you've no more time.  
Burn down to ash beneath  
a shroud, laid out within a  
stone, unguarded tomb.

Heatless ash – bloodless, cold –  
from flame-frayed feathers.  
Iron pegs in splintered wood;  
riven rope about a ring of jewelled thorns.

Roll away.  
Germinate and grow beyond the broken  
surface of the ashes.

Rise above.  
Ascend with shattered wrists  
and broken heels.

## 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.

## Rhyming Couplets

You're a poet  
and you didn't know it.

For writing, you've a flair  
that, of, you weren't even aware.

At writing music for the eyes  
you're good and hadn't realised.

A rhythm-only song  
composer who'd not cottoned on.

Excelling in the written word  
had not, at all, to you, occurred.

You're a touch arrogant –  
don't pretend you really hadn't

known it, quite undoubtedly, for ages.



## Sonnet -18

Shall I contrast you with a winter's night,  
between blackened-sky and white-laden ground?  
You are e'en clearer; by more stars alight.  
Too cold and rending can winter be found:  
sometimes so harsh it cannot renew life  
and oft as bleak as a dry summer's scorched.  
In place of optimism, merely strife;  
no flourishing, only survival's forced.  
But you? You reinvigorate life, all,  
reflect the cold fire o'the winter's sun,  
bring not death and end but nurture spring, call  
the future forth; art for the Earth wholesome.  
So long as one can love and hope and think,  
so long shall I converse with you in ink.

Hai(tea-)ku

African tea-leaf.

Hungarian tea-maker.

English tea-drinker.

## Clarinet In B-flat

Many hills man-flattened:  
alt-topography imposed on  
native-nature. Under  
avenues and over, undulating  
high and deep: spectral hills.  
Annexed, unsettled, settled; a  
trail – diagonal and broad –  
tracks hist'ry through the grid  
and to the ocean.

Nexus, beyond  
ever-shrinking  
waters.

A sprawl that spreads to  
meet the earth, under; the  
sky, above. To make a name, the  
tower-tops find heaven's  
empty: move in, artists;  
re-claim, gentry.  
Deified and demonised,  
all the while accruing  
multi-culture.

New century,  
entered into  
with violence.

Your panarchic cycles (self-  
organising; top-down constraint)  
run through their pure complexity,  
kinetic. Lenapean treasure; Western jewel.

## 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.

## Poems At The Place Between Commitments

### *A Tanka In The Meantime*

To notebooks (labelled)  
onward, then. To a-waiting  
ideas, then, return.  
A subsequent, first author.  
An old, returning writer.

### *A Haiku In The Hereafter*

A path or many  
leading from the harbour to  
an idea or few.

### *Blank Verse Upon The Cusp/The Wake/The Border*

Leave behind (Oh, leave behind!) tee eff aitch:  
it is done (All done!); it's been completed.  
There is left to do: sharing, reading through;  
whilst another takes its first notebook-steps.  
The snake, the star, the cross, the crescent moon?  
The gathering of nostalgic murals?  
The city's map's begun to be filled-in.  
By pendown, it'll be fleshed-out further.  
By other's penrise, it'll be finished.

## 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.

## Eternally The Daytime-Dream Alight In My Mind's Eye

Sprite and summoned sisters,  
eachall given names.

Girls, eachall: three daughters  
in soundful, coloured haze.

Blessed, now, by you;  
the river sings one thousand questions.  
Brought (born not) into a kinship:  
infinite love-connection.

Not yet met and, oh, still yet  
everalways all together.  
Carried, cautioned, conversed with,  
kept close, allowed untethered.

Sung to, sung with, writ of:  
within the sky, upon the ground.  
Eachall only brought together (yet)  
in coloured haze so full of sound.

## Three Haiku & A Sentence

Hurling to the edge.  
(Accept the lack of limit.)  
Rushing to the climb.

Scale beyond the ground.  
(Accept limited control.)  
Fall facing forward.

Be 'tween two unknowns.  
(Take responsibility.)  
*Known's* the illusion.

Go back – when the sun lets through the ancient, scorching starlight – and sit among the fury on the marsh.



## Of The World; Of Animals

Underwritten; overridden:  
a computer running on a code of  
irrationality and potent instinct.

Overridden; overwhelmed:  
an animal of detached flesh  
and powerfully calculating blood.

Overwhelmed; self-aware:  
paragon of life-bequeathing light  
and of death-bestowing heat.

Earthlings in the image of the sun.

## 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.

## A Haiku And Another Haiku Shortly After The First Haiku

Crouched around a fire,  
articulating stories –  
what is more human?

Haiku, haiku (Three...),  
haiku, haiku, haiku (... two...),  
haiku haiku (... one.).

Again.

Solitude: I'll meet with you.

*When?*

Not now.

*Where?*

Not here.

*'Not now' is never.*

Somewhere. Somewhen.

*'Not here' is nowhere.*

There and then.

*Never and nowhere...*

Never and nowhere...

*Try a-*

Try a-

*gain.*

## 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.).

## Oh... Well That Changes Things

So, apparently,  
this 5-7-5 structure  
is not quite correct.

In Japanese, right,  
it's sounds, and not syllables,  
that really matter.

Other than keeping  
short-long-short, it seems haiku  
are quite flexible.

Well then...  
I guess I can compose  
haiku like this.

Hmm...  
I wonder if it's the same with tanka  
?  
Possibly.  
Potentially.

## Hamlet In Haiku

### Act 1

#### *Scene 1*

Who's there? Friends only.  
Silent, spectral father-king.  
Cock crows; prince awaits.

#### *Scene 2*

Insincerity.  
Seems? Alone in grief sustained.  
The king, your father.

#### *Scene 3*

Sad parting siblings –  
obey thy father's counsel –  
ne'er to meet again.

#### *Scene 4*

Inebriation  
within; without, fate beckons.  
Still silent spirit.

#### *Scene 5*

*Foul murder: avenge!*  
Swear by my sword! *Remember...*  
So, Uncle: adieu...

### Act 2

#### *Scene 1*

Advise, thus, my son.  
Puppeteer or puppeted?  
Stricken fair-lovelorn.

#### *Scene 2*

The wind's southerly  
o'er lords, friends, monarchs, players.  
Conscience by mouse-trap.

## Act 3

### *Scene 1*

Hidden, 's Lord and King.  
Paralysis of action.  
Nymph: sole innocent.

### *Scene 2*

Frighted with false fire:  
chorus stokes its poison-flames.  
Hot blood and daggers.

### *Scene 3*

Thoughtless words in prayer.  
Raise thy sword, waver, and lose  
the name of action.

### *Scene 4*

Rash and bloody deed!  
Rank corruption... Caught between  
Queen and father-ghost.

## Act 4

### *Scene 1*

Madness by rapier!  
O, it had been so with us!  
Discord and dismay.

### *Scene 2*

Stowed's intruding fool;  
with dust, its kin, compounded.  
Bring me to the king.

### *Scene 3*

Through guts of beggars,  
unto one or other place.  
No trav'ller returns...



#### *Scene 4*

Norway approaches.  
To England, Denmark leaves with  
thoughts bloody worthless.

#### *Scene 5*

With sweet flowers, go.  
Siblings lost t'one another.  
Sweet ladies: goodnight.

#### *Scene 6*

I'll return, dear friend.  
Good fellows go to England  
with my compliments.

#### *Scene 7*

Sons of fathers lost,  
ruled by action; ruled by thought.  
Goodnight, sweet princess.

### Act 5

#### *Scene 1*

Knaves and jesters, all.  
Depart, tragedy's victim,  
used even in death.

#### *Scene 2*

Poisoned minds and blades.  
Death in the state of Denmark.  
Silence... Soldiers shoot.

## Rambling To Close

And so  
the final pages.

I have, on the table  
next to me,  
the notebook to follow on.

Number 6.

It's pink, this time.  
And a hardcover.  
But why?  
Just cos.

I'll end this fifth one here,  
at this table, in this moment  
(already passed/already past),  
between a full cup of coffee  
and a cup of coffee early  
on its journey  
to being  
empty.

P'rhaps I'll throw this out on WordPress.

P'rhaps not...

It's only rambling, after all.

## Between That Postbox & Those Steps Beside The River

Gate entry by the castle sentry –  
a village fenced-in,  
a floodplain walled –  
and stop to see a  
bright, black sea of  
hair 'bout Balkan eyes,  
red-postbox close behind.  
First moment out of moments  
over years... surceased, rent, all.

Enthralled by accent, manner, eyes,  
movement, hair, smile – still to find  
that comp'ny, person, thoughts, 'n laughter  
(as far's I ever knew them) fixed it faster:  
that o'erwhelming darklight flood  
(tween neurons fire; claim the blood).  
From moment *Then* to moment *Last*...  
still here in the present (now the recent past)  
is the bedrock weathered forever by  
deep, unique, green Balkan eyes.

Broad and even steps.  
A river, there, reflects the moment.  
"... ."  
Articulated. Selfish?  
Pain shared and merely hurts another.

A cowbell rings.  
My wrists? No longer red and white  
to signal spring and friendship.

*разкайвам се*

Worn and worn;  
boxed away, remembered.

*Съжалявам*

Deep, unique,  
fascinating, friendly,  
singing, sea-green Balkan eyes.

## Two Six Twelve Six Two

First: two.  
Then a line that has six.  
The next and middle line is double, so has twelve.  
Then we are back to six.  
Last: two.

Cloudless,  
starful but for the sun  
(its living/dying glare hides its past and future):  
the sky encompasses  
the earth.

And then,  
were it not for writing,  
there would be little excuse to be so often  
around and about town  
all day.

*Bonus haiku*

Scrap 'rules'.  
Five, seven, five, seven, five, seven, five...  
No.

## 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.

## Will I Not Want Yet Still Want Not?

Steam...

To be lost or not?

Ballad.

Novella.

In the new year will I want  
for words to place in rhythmic space?

Will I not want yet still  
want not to pen, particularly, anything?

Release, release...

A day about the harbour.  
A night around a fire.

Take some time off from building cities.

## 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.



## Two Tanka & A Single Word

### *Egypt & Industry*

A third on home...  
No break – instead, I'll build  
two at once.  
Cities in parallel, blended;  
the nearer past and ancient times.

### *Paradise*

Wait, around your fire,  
a year or so for dedication.  
Paradise...  
Birthed 'mongst books on 46th street;  
elaborated on near C'lumbus Circle

### *Ideas!*

Ideas!

## A Tanka, Then A Word, And Then A Sentence

A sentence –  
unbroken opening – and  
mist on water.  
Tomorrow is the first release.  
Today is the last announcement.

Finally.

A week earlier than originally planned, the prologue and first chapter of *The Floating Harbour* shall be released tomorrow morning.

## 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.

## 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.

## Éponine

Too ignored (pen 'n mind) a-by  
the author, e'en as he writes  
the lad's forgetting of you,  
his seeing past and through.

Attention lavished only as your  
arc falls to conclusion.  
Le wretched, not adopted,  
from precocious to deprived.

Without actor, song, or music;  
with only ink on page...  
Your simple passing? Wrenching.  
*She tried to smile again and died.*

## When's't? Where's't?

When's't, where's't,  
the poignant pivot-point?  
An ultimate transition,  
fundamental and forever  
and foralways, and for me  
a long-awaited (necessarily)  
movement from the mist into  
th'eternal daytime-dream.

Letters given eyes for to  
decipher and give voice  
within the minds to whom  
their purpose is preserved.

Responsibility for raising  
aft' retrieving from parentless-  
ness – extant and expecting  
something owed and deserved.

When's't, where's't,  
the poignant pivot-point?  
Dividing line between  
before and after...

## 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.

## September

Thirty days hath September:  
some are joy, some that're sombre;  
some upon which life's begun,  
some upon which life's undone.  
A line 'tween Autumn/Summer clear,  
afore the final quarter-year.



## 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.

## Steightmuntz

I wonder  
what my future  
comes to visit with  
upon the present,  
'fore't continues on  
becoming past.

A dog with his paws on his  
compan'yunz arms.  
Three people talkin' weed and Somal'ya.  
A gluten-(a-)free IPA 'n  
the smell of Sunday roast.

Churnin' out.  
Not (yet) burnin' out.  
Not not learnin' owt.  
I publish very, very nearly everything.

## Each Time No Longer

I never stopped  
building it up, each time,  
in my head.

But:

it no longer  
drags me under  
when it doesn't happen.

...

And still  
time passes,  
nonetheless.  
No matter what!  
No matter what...

The future  
ever finds me,  
sooner or later.  
It never hasn't!  
It never hasn't...

The page is new 'n old 'n blank  
'n filled with ink 'n crease-lines.

Am I ever writing this?  
You were always reading this.  
The stars knew they were burning...  
yet they've been cold eternally.

Reflection on what is  
sudden-a-ly always then  
was all that could be done  
as time (still...) passes.

Sadness can be so  
beautiful; sometimes;  
inevitability can be  
so sad.

But...

*I see*

now is now  
(it never wasn't)

*trees of green,*

and once it's been  
it always is.

*red roses, too.*

This moment's  
already mem'ry,

*I see them bloom*

both for me  
and for you.

*And I think to myself...*

Nonetheless...

## Transcription

Where do they come from?  
So oft so indeliberate...  
(Joyce, by the way:  
not even he uses the  
bloody Oxford Comma!)

Just as thoughts, of course;  
they are thoughts, after all.  
Sprung somewhat articulated  
with scope to shape, to shear,  
to mold, to manage, to build upon,  
to wonder whence appeared.

A poor trait  
of the art is:  
as a young man  
I can't get it,  
and by the time I do  
I'll have little time  
and (p'rhaps) less with which  
to fill it.

First draft, first draft,  
rarely written diff'rent.  
Is it craft (true craft)  
if all you do's transcribe it?

Absorbent mimicry,  
aping all at once together.

All  
at once  
together.

Aping slightly diff'rently.

A künstlerroman  
(look it up)  
is, I guess, the first one.  
Then what is all that follows?  
Mere fortsetzungs-roman?

Is it over?  
Seems like it...  
Yep.

## What Even Are Haiku?

I'm still not  
entirely sure I really get  
haiku...

Like,  
I know it's not 5-7-5...  
but does it even need to be short-long-short?

I don't know.  
I'll learn Japanese.  
Then I might.

## To Keep From Writing

### *A Tanka To Keep From Writing Nothing*

Why's the page  
a page still blank?  
Fill up.  
Take the ink from the (FlexGrip) pen;  
articulate the uncontrollable.

### *A Haiku (?) To Keep From Writing Onething*

A flame 'n electric lights.  
The futile furnace in the distance 'n the past.  
No contest.



## Contemplation

Con (-science)  
temp (-orary)  
pla (-netary)  
tion.

## 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.

## And The Cat'll Follow

A breeze over tea  
'n the cat's outside,  
watchin' from his spot  
atop the patio.

I (Lo-fi-Japan-infused)  
write for Monday morn',  
penultimate pen pressings  
and'm not sure (I'm guessing)  
but I think I'll benefit  
from breaking with this norm.

A breeze 'n tea's less  
(switch off light –  
the bugs draw near!).  
Now I'm moved:  
I'm by the cat outside,  
atop the patio.

Oh... he's left me!  
He's gone. Oh well.  
Farewell. Faredecently.  
I'll be inside soon  
(no stars, no lunar  
lantern) and the cat'll follow.

This day's the last  
for a while.

## Hiatus

Here  
I'll  
abey  
this  
unceasing  
sharing.

However,  
if  
another  
thought's  
unearthed...  
sure.

H'anyway...  
I  
am  
thus  
uttering:  
さようなら.

## Waka By Will: Chust Some Choka

### *Choka #1 - 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.

### *Choka #2 - 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.

*Choka #3 - 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.

Someday(.)?

I should  
(someday)  
walk from home to here;  
walk from here to home.

I should  
(someday)  
hike the hills between;  
follow the river.

I should  
(someday)  
trek the trailing paths  
and sit 'n be.

I should  
(someday)  
write while on  
that journey.

Someday  
(I should)  
shall I walk from  
Bath to Bristol;  
Bristol to Bath(.)?

Someday  
(I should)  
should I  
(someday)  
travel on again(.)?



## Waka By Will: A Couple Of Katauta

### *Katauta #1 - She Is*

Never you. No...  
But I told you - f'that I'm glad.  
She is wonderful for you.

### *Katauta #2 - Leave*

Another for you?  
A thought that's not completed...  
Leave those deep, green Balkan eyes.

## Periodically Checking WhatsApp

Leaning  
(fist to cheekbone)  
on my left arm on a table  
as the gulls sing  
and the girl speaks  
and the ray-d'yo emits sound.

Blue light!

## Waka By Will: A Solitary Sedoka

*Sedoka #1 - D'you Know?*

D'you know how many  
children I have seen you in?  
For how long I've spoken t'you?

*Through the written word  
I've already replied; I  
can read our time together.*

4.18am

The early bird  
gets extra time  
to sit 'n write 'n read  
before heading out  
to catch worms.

!

With whom; where; how soon; when....  
the moment:  
"So it's you, then!"

## Waka By Will: A Series Of Sedoka

### *From The Sandi Coast Of The New World*

Hung upon a string's  
the lion's tooth that I found:  
a necklace I made for you.

One of a diff'ring  
two – with you, from fire pit,  
I walked 'neath the Southern Cross.

### *From The Royal Mount Of The Northern Territories*

Dark 'n curled hair.  
Intense, in text, in person.  
Meet me by Victor'ya Falls.

You've become settled,  
fully integrated in  
the mem'ries of another.

### *From An Old Norse Farm By A Clear, Bright Lake*

Four-hand piano  
playing under thatched roof  
to Zimbabwean sunlight.

Lunarful midnight:  
swimming through the cold water.  
From friend to more to stranger...

### *From The Pure Land Of The Southern East & A Ford By The Willow Trees*

Along the Irwell  
(I taught you th'art of fencing.)  
we walked from town to city.

Along the Irwell  
(You left another for me.)  
we walked from city to town.

*From A Steep Hill By A Watery Meadow*

I felt as though you  
were... inevitable.  
That feeling's passed from my mind.

"At last! At last!" At  
least (at last) t'was seen through: you  
were not inevitable.

*From The Port & Passage By The White Sea's Coast*

A brace of years; a  
bond battled for – strive-strengthened.  
Your impact sitting deeply.

In winter formed and  
in winter ended. A bond  
devastatingly caring.

## 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

## Waka By Will: Queen Square Haiku

Haiku:  
like the blues –  
easy; impossible.

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

TUMP  
pprrr... pprrrr....  
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!

## 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.

## Waka By Will: Here're Haiku (Sorry... Senryu)

I've done  
plenty of haiku  
(Or have I?).

So...  
lots of my haiku...  
were senryu?!

Does it  
matter, though  
?

I Wish I'd Written: not a haiku, but a zappai

The first verse of Shelter From The Storm.

The last verse of Mr. Tambourine Man.

Any verse of Desolation Row.

## Waka By Will: Don't Mind These Dodoitsu

### *Dodoitsu #1 – Th'morning Shade 'N Sun*

Marching marching marching on/  
off to work to school to write.  
Rolling traction tyres tread  
th'morning shade 'n sun.

### *Dodoitsu #2 – Sounds At 8.30am*

taptaptaptap taptaptap  
[The sound of scissors cutting.]  
squee squee squee squee squee ppuuhhh [Silence.]  
Prepping for the class.

### *Dodoitsu #3 – Writing Workers*

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

## Carefree Commas

I love  
to comma-splice, and  
ignore Word.

## Waka By Will: Azzorted Zappai

### *Zappai #1 - This Is Zappai*

To do with nature?  
To do with human nature?  
No – this is zappai!

### *Zappai #2 - 'Tiz Not*

Thu langwij:  
'tiz not fownetik.  
It coodunt bee.



## Semi-Colons: a zappai

A semi-colon  
here; a semi-colon  
there.

## Waka By Will: H'okay, Here're Haikai – and this time... it's accurate

### Haiku

#### *Rules followed:*

- *On nature*
- *3 lines*
- ~~5/7/5~~

Torrential tumult to  
th'Earth – fall...  
A contained plant indoors.

### Senryu

#### *Rules followed:*

- *On human nature*
- *3 lines*
- ~~5/7/5~~

A chattering of consciousness:  
Spanish, left; English, right.  
Todo nunca se dice...

### Zappai

#### *Rules followed:*

- *On neither nature nor human nature*
- *3 lines*
- ~~5/7/5~~

Checkered –  
all colour; none.  
Surround the pharaoh!

## 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.

## Unblank Papyrus

I am, oftentimes, distracted from  
(as the time 'tween that 'n this attests)  
my unblanking of papyrus  
by one and/or another of  
these human unwrit beings,  
being fascinating to my bodymind  
and my mindbody.

What can I, with symbols spaced,  
do but allude and silhouettise?  
I can show you the shadow  
of the Earth upon the Moon  
and hope, from that, that you'll  
see splendour – white, blue, green...

Even when literal,  
what is't but indirect?  
Even a shadow on the moon  
is better drawn...

is better sung  
is better danced  
is better played.

## Sky: a haiku in Japanese

くもり.

あお.

おはよう!

Cloudy.

Blue.

Good morning!

## Bluebird: a haiku in Japanese

あおとり,  
わたしは  
ねこ!

Blue bird,  
I am  
cat!

From Pupil: a senryu in Japanese

ありがとう,  
せんせい!  
－がくせい

*Thank you,  
teacher!*  
－ Student

## Unintentional Zappai

What words do I know?

Not many.

And I don't know the grammar.



## A Senryu Become Tanka


In-fucking-

furiating-

fatuation.

Intensely inconvenient, is  
a sudden depth of feeling.

## Expression Pure 'N Hamstrung

わたしは a writer  
for to find –  
somehow, someway –  
uh langwidge witch  
becomes invisible,  
'n leaves only clear  
neural waters,  
ever-same 'n ever-diff'ring,  
as  in her course,  
unspeakable yet speaking  
plain to all.

Words like  
water...  
see their symbols & understand.  
I want to write the way  
a dancer dances.

## Choice

Two roads *To be, or not to be*  
diverged in a yellow wood,  
and both *Must give us pause*  
that morning *Dread* equally lay.

I could not travel both. *And*  
*by opposing end them* Long I stood  
and looked down one *Perchance*  
*to dream* as far's *No more* I could.

I doubted if... *No traveler returns*  
if I should e'er come back, *And*  
*makes us rather bear those ills*  
*we have* ages and ages hence.

Two roads *To be, or not to be*  
diverged in a yellow wood...  
*And lose the name* and that has made  
*Of action* all the difference.

(A collage poem. Words in italics by William Shakespeare; words not in italics by Robert Frost.  
Placing of words by me.)

## 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.)

## Number 20

All, but for the petals,  
crimson – red that chips/  
that fades to fray to  
wooden boards so varnished  
o'er (so layered) so paled-  
petals might lay settled, flat,  
silent in a pool of crimson;  
still within a painted scene.

## Time For Two Things

Not much time for  
writing,  
really,  
besides writing questions.  
Not much time for  
reading,  
either,  
besides reading answers.  
Only, really, time for  
teaching  
(worth it)  
others to do those  
two things I want to do:  
reading and writing.

## Samurai Tanka

さむらい:  
いつもの  
けいかい,  
ねこのように  
うごきをまている.

Samurai:  
always on  
alert,  
like a cat  
waiting for movement.

## 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.



## Joji To Kawa

いつも  
と  
えいえんに:  
じょじとかわ;  
くうかんとじかん.

Always  
and  
forever:  
girl-child and river;  
space and time.

## 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.

## Noticing The Outside Looking In

You know, sometimes  
I think (/realise) that others  
tend to know me more than I do.

## 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.

## 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...

Taiyō; Tsuki To Chikyū

えいえんにしぬ

たいよう:

ひかりかわ.

つきとちきゅう:

あらいながされた.

Forever dying

sun:

light river.

Moon and earth:

washed away.

## Shumba Hadzi

6.30am – *Shumba Famba* – 3TMs

Ice-turned dew, dripped  
from off the grass of early morning,  
mourning nearly having made it  
to the sky above the earth;  
a gradual, rolling rumble from few  
spots on the horizon brings  
a chorus for the dawn to sail  
its orange sunlight o'er;  
the sev'ral layers needed now'll  
be tied about the waist upon  
return to the percussive smells  
of smoke-screened breakfast time –  
somewhat-whittled sticks in  
foreign hands;  
somewhat-formed beings in  
foreign lands.

A river filled with green under  
a bridge of painted wood  
stood 'tween the watered lawn  
and th'expanse of gated nature;  
boulders 'fore a jetty, jutting  
out from park to lodge,  
bounce the call *Work harder!*  
of *Drink lager!* birds in  
mem'ry mist/in sound remembered;  
the sailing orange sunlight floats  
now on the rolling rumble of the  
cute 'n cracking chorus up the rise –  
emanating out of cubs enclosed, entrusting  
their forgotten separation's to  
ends of independent wilds;  
to freedom found across their generations.

A photo framed, a decade after...

I meet find out her say she's gone goodbye...

I walk the write a rise to greet a poem in her memory...

There's a muscle-mem'ry heartache  
in the structure of my chest,  
embedded in the past along beside her.



I leave the reconstruction  
as it neveralways was,  
and sit there in  
the recent now,  
far and long away,  
thinking of a lion cub,  
her gaze 'n head-rub pressure,  
and how, so strangely, ten years on,  
she's fixing that look on me,  
her proud 'n wild 'n sunlit eyes,  
in cub and adolescent, showing clear  
the lioness she never could be;  
showing clear the lioness she always was.

Ndatenda, Tanaka. Bye bye.

## Dependent On A Crashing Wave Of Fire

The mist perturbs the shim'ring  
of the slowly dying sun and  
throws its embers over all  
that turns to face it.

A circle – searing – sent through  
time t'ward bluewhite atmosphere,  
masking o'er its ancestors and  
spilling in from space –  
bonded 'cross the emptiness eternal.

A spring begets a stream becomes  
a river raising tides to wash  
away the nurtured land it inundated.

Life raised upon a rock in an  
inevitable ocean,  
dependent on a crashing wave of fire.

## 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.

## 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.

## Tanka Desune

しかしながら,  
いまでは...  
わたしだけ.  
わたしみ;  
わたしも.

However,  
until now...  
just me.  
I only;  
me too.

## Canopus

Ressuling tha  
rocks that rend thuh  
wawter,  
uh streem moovs beneath  
gray kanoeppee ov mattur –  
vissuhrah entoombed; brightist star.

Too keep moss  
uhway, aweigh:  
thuh kurtun, sehruhmoenyul.  
Ah nyoo, bispoekun chest.  
Thuh suns ov Hawrus.

## Tanka Tanka Zappai

Life is so  
vanishingly brief  
in a place  
incomprehensibuhly  
endless.

Write it; move  
on. Write it;  
move on. Write  
it; move  
on. Wr...

So far...  
So far.  
Sofa...



## Akirakanisuru

How do you articulate  
(lying, list'ning)  
notated waves awash the lightness?  
あきらかにする。  
よろしく…

## The Wall's Another Canvas

Whither writing  
really emanates,  
I don't really know.  
Take syllabic space 'n  
empty it of possibility;  
realise in scribed 'n  
scribbled ink.

Blocked by  
lay'red, impenetrable  
(ostensibly...) brick-bounds?  
Colour o'er by  
kaleidoscopy.

## A Tanka Of Titles In Acronym

TFH.

TBOSC.

FOTABTFOTN.

TNYWTTSJF.

???

## 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.

## Ephem'ral Immortality

Somestuff to  
unblank these lines,  
encrypted as they are  
with syllables rejecting  
penned-ink 'less  
composed completely.

Somestuff to  
bring out these lines,  
pre-written as they are  
with their signature of  
time 'n tempo, traced  
in rock-grey matter.

Somestuff to  
release, release this  
ink-spring from this fount;  
tendons tuned to channel  
through my grip my  
abstractions.

Somestuff to  
present to whom-  
soever ever reads it.  
Five thousand years etched  
into sandstone stood  
those fleeting thoughts.

## On My Nihongo

ひらがな

と/ト

カナ are done.

かんじ left/

カンジ left.

Hiragana

&/&

kana are done.

Kanji left/

kanji left.

; ? : .

or,

## A Sedoka On The Explaining Of The Concept & Feeling Of Love To A Young Child

And how would you, then,  
explain to a child just what  
love is; just what it means?

*I'd say: It's when  
you're more excited for  
another's birthday than your own.*

## 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!



## Adagio... Hanging There, Unwav'ring

Slow... such  
energy,  
rolling in...  
Expanse of an-  
nounced  
art-intent  
descends to guide th'-  
ethereal.

Feel...  
O'er th'aural landscape  
rest the guiding waves.

Whither  
is the purest  
note, held as  
dancer's poise?  
Sing.

Wirdz: uh zapaye

Play, pleigh,  
puhley with werds  
an' thuh shapes oui throe 2 katchthm.

## Fifty-Seven Minutes

Where's the poh-tree now?  
I expect it. Accept it.  
Weight... await... a weight...  
Lie-ing somewherewhen around.

Where's th'poet then?  
Except in streams un-sifted: silent,  
strewn about in thrown-out throes  
of signals – channeled; symbol shaped.

?Whence (oh whence) a-whence it  
filt's filuvial, uptaking silts  
of diff'ring reams, eroding off  
the pressured sediment.

Such serrated gates, through which  
only may pass expression...  
Breach the curved internment  
somewhichwayhowevermore!

Where is the poetry and  
where's the poet that it clasps to?  
Seeping, seeking life  
beyond the mind...

]]]]]

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

## Approach (Haiku)

ねこがくる;  
ひがてっています.  
とりがうたっている...

Cat (subject) comes;  
sun (subject) shining is.  
Bird (subject) singing is...

The cat comes;  
the sun is shining.  
The bird is singing...

Rittun Langwidj

When will  
*gotta, gonna, wanna*  
be standard written English?

## Write

ぼくは...

ぼくがさっかです.

かきます; かきました.

As for me...

I am a writer.

I write; I have written.

## The Birth Day Of The Sun

### I

The eve of day least sunlit:  
bleat of sheep in bleak mid-winter  
nocturne, nestled 'midst one 'nother  
'neath thatched, woodbeamed shelter.

The solstice aft' the death-throes  
of the sun rend the horizon;  
sinking flame o'erlaid by th'lifeless  
cloak, adorned with silent stars.

Heat-death quietude – the solar  
spirit stands in stillness; solitary  
sings the servant girl til  
joined by lowing chorus.

A ewe, alone in wand'ring  
on the outskirts of the town,  
lies down in purity, her lamb  
of mourning left to chase the Jordan.

Bayit-Lekhem in wintrous calm as  
coarsest night kills evening.  
The hovels house their sleepful rest,  
passed o'er by angelus.

Wisps o'whispers – wistless – waft  
o'er deepest valley wide;  
peak: the tippingturningtidefall  
moves the waters – breaking – west.



## II

Earthly etherea: adorn  
these pregnant plains.  
E'er-seeded maiden land;  
adored ether'yul Earth.

Break 'to budding birth-throes –  
th'labour of the eastern shore,  
begetting new lucif'rous wings  
to rise and fall in fire.

Faint cries fringe the pre-morn  
firmament, its white-lit pitch  
disturbed – inevitable transformation  
scorned by energy.

Soundless stands each stretch of houses.  
Come to courtyard at street's end:  
muted's the protracted pain of  
tight'ning 'ternal walls.

Straw heaps strewn 'n livestock  
huddled; wood-slat-slating o'er.  
The servant girl – with woman – coos  
'n shifts new-soiled hay.

Hunched paternal, bale-atop,  
whittling wistsomely, a fathered  
figure frets upon th'fate faced  
by his bead of light beloved.

Tearing at the world's beginning,  
crowned in blackblue-goldenred,  
the sky sings of arrival as  
the sun returns to being.

### III

[ring]

softly    distant

[ring]

cry soft 'n distant rise

[ring]

life's dawn murm'ring chorus distant  
rise in waves white-gold

[ring]

seep, sound, to black-fled sky  
pale re-birth rings tidal

[ring]

[   ]

th'cold cast of beamed horizon  
th'morrow 'comes today

[   ]

straw, rags, 'n apron bloodied  
myriad maidens passed in bringing life  
whittled lamb left bale-atop  
he'll add his arms to cradle

[still]

glazesome vision  
(Merit-Amun...)  
betrothed, b'loved, wished-for child

[sainted, softful silence]

Silent morning.  
Earthly peace.  
Servant girl re-swaddles.  
A trough, now cleared of water, filled  
with cloth 'n wool 'n hay.

Clouding o'er in patchwork blue.  
A crashing wave of fire crests  
the eastmost ends of Iss-Ra-El  
and floods the world with dawn.

Sett'ling o'er 'n int' th'present,  
sending out oblation:  
initiate anew, incarnate is  
the sun – arisen.

[sighed silence – soften]

[rustled makeshift manger]

[            ]

[        ]

[cry]

## All You Need Is Art

There's no poem  
you can pen  
that isn't poetry;

no calligraphy  
you'll lay  
that isn't art;

nary an  
ink-sweep you might track  
across papyrus but will be

hamstrung expression;  
true-ish transcription;  
written word.

When Who Why ? You .

?Who are you...

?When are you...

I wonder when

you were you will be born...

We'll know.

Soon enough.

Are you awake already?

Why am I?

Answer: You.

## Others

You are  
not  
born alone.

You do  
not  
have to die alone.

Life is  
lived  
with others.

## 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

siiiiiiiix?!"



## 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.]

*hahuhuhuhahuh*

[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.

## Writing Is A Visual Art

Papyrus painted o'er 'n o'er;  
sinews sending song-spilt ink.  
Have you, yet, learnt to dance?

## 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.

## A Flow'r Upon A Grave

O, that this earth, which keeps the world in awe  
and rests beside the Avon – spirited –  
should dance through sinew-spilled ink ne'er more,  
nor track the rhythms it inspired...  
Shape 'n send forw'd the currents riv'ring by!  
With your time-warped scraps the bed doth lie  
suffused! Anew's the influence – in flux –  
with each cascade of spring to inundate  
th'fields! E'er fallow lies our linguistic muck;  
t'you may yet it turn for cultivation.  
Star-fire across the firmament! Its place?  
Lighting up the way for the rising sun.  
Four hundred years... aft' all this stretch of time  
your quill, once dipped in potted-ink, moves mine.

## Leaves Of Mind

Haze, holding unreality,  
forms, then, a mem'ry – false – :  
she leaves to find her own way.  
Th'river's crossed; the  
mount'nous paths hear boot-steps.

## A Journey, Ubiquitous

Palm-fronds, found hid  
within the uncarved wood,  
stretch shade about the desert  
of the skirting board, as  
'Ray'byun camels c'lect their  
stores in sanded, varnished vista.

The whiteblue gates of  
bluewhite bars guard  
entrance to the softbrown steps;  
the caravan is led  
by robed-figures.

## 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

shhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh

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

## A Sonnet To The Art Of Writing

Captured by the least of all expression  
and its inky'phemral marks... Th'page unblanked;  
coloured-o'er 'n splashed's the metre'd rhythm  
with th'motion of a riv'ring mem'ry bank  
that winds, awashed a-by the water's wake,  
its sinew-channeled, solitary surge  
e'er finds papyrus reeds 'gainst which to break  
'n bind a mind that's shared 'n sealed b'hind words.  
A dance constrained; melody restricted...  
(Vibrations 'long a string sound out the truth!)  
Creation pained; a look that's lost, or hid...  
(A head placed 'gainst another's more, e'en mute!)  
And yet, e'er out from your confines I give  
myself, 'n paint 'n dance 'n love 'n live.

## To See The World Through Quartz 'N Ash

A caravan of cars 'n vans  
a-wheel o'er paint-marked road.  
The triad canopy contain their thoughts.

## Zappai For A Person Passing

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

## 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.

Am 'N Will Be

I was  
already  
looking back at this.

## Some Blank Verse, In Which I Indirectly State 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.

## A Tanka By The Banks(a)

ひかり...  
日本語もえいごも  
わたしなく。  
たいようかく；  
かわまで。

Light...  
I will write both  
Japanese and English.  
From the sun;  
until the river.



## Reflecting On The Recent Present

An alley, open.

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

## 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.

## For The Lady In The Dulcet-Hued Bandana

Kaleidoscopic script of searching  
shapes in muted green... The wisps of  
orange marshal light amidst the blue.  
Pink jumper;  
light laugh 'n lovely smile.

## Many Words

Lapis sprayed  
upon a protest wall –  
half-covered call to action.  
A dragon's hide;  
two work to clean the gutter.

## 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?

## A Tanka In Japanese

あそこ  
になりたい  
かわをこえて.  
あそこ... ひのでよで  
ひかりがそだてる.

Over there  
I wish to be,  
beyond the river.  
Over there... as far as the sunrise,  
bringing up the light.

## Kwohrunteend

[illegible]



Dawn

...

you...

But now we're sep'rate.

You left to teach  
outside the capital.

## 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.

## Within

Can I not write  
without cafés?  
Without all without  
my head within  
my vision?

Two tidal swells  
of light 'n sound  
awash e'er o'er  
my senses...

What,  
in lightless silence,  
would I conjure?

## A Tanka On The Superiority Of Tanka

Tanka

>

haiku.

That's right.

You heard me.

## A Song From Mem'ry Deep

What  
songs have I sung  
to you?  
(I hope you run out  
of space...)

## Without Life

Death,  
chasing after life...  
Does it not realise?  
It cannot be  
without the living.

## A Zappai For Your Consideration

You've  
already read  
this poem.

## Both The River & The Sky

そらもかわま  
あなたのゆうがたまちます;  
たいようはあなたのどくそうせいでかがやきます.  
ぼくは... あなたのうれしさを  
かきよす.

Both the river  
and the sky  
keep your elegance;  
the sun shines with your originality.  
As for me... I write with your joy.



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.*

## Café Front Garden

[illegible]

vwik! vwik!

weeeuk!

vwik! vwik!

eah?

vwik!

eoh? eoh...

weeeeeeeuk!

tooweeeeeh

tooweeeh.

vweep.

vweep.

vuhweeeep.

vuhweep.

vweep

zwoop? eoh?

eo!

huhahihuhihuh..

huhahuhahiuuh

puhrrrruhrprrrrrrrrrppprppprrrrrrrrrrrprrr

zweep!

vwik

prprprprpr

tooweeh?

toooweeeeh?!

ewuup.

ew-up.

ewup.

ew-up.

ew-up!

zweeep?

teeoh.

teeoh.

ty-oh.

pyeeep! pyeep.

pyeeew. pyeeep!

pyee.

pyeeep!

pyeew.

teep!

uh-eh.

pyeew!

puhrrprrrprrrprrrrr

pyew!

prrrprrrprrrp

pyeep!

pyeew.

pyeew.

## 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?

## Tanka #?

Sitting 'neath the fury  
of a fire eight minutes passed –  
pyeew pyeeew pyw (in my left ear); puhahihuh puhahih (in my right).  
vwik vwiik vwii vwiiiik; prrrprrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr  
twee tweeeee tw tweeee; prrrprrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr

ぼくもあなたも (Both You & I)

あなたがすみます;  
ぼくがすみしました。  
われらはおなじゅうすりしましたか?  
ぼくもあなたも  
せいしんをわけあいます。

You live;  
I have lived.  
Did we coincide?  
Both you and I  
share a spirit.

## Without Death

Life,  
fleeing from death...  
Does it not realise?  
Its soul is only true  
when mortal.



## The Ballad Of Elatklof Esrever

The end, t'was, for our hero fair,  
her hair in ragged strands.  
She took her final breaths 'n waves  
of light in distant lands.

With wearied limb, poor Elatklof,  
aloft, held right-hand stained,  
its crease-lined palm a vital hue  
of fire the stars reclaimed.

The blade she'd fallen on – her  
own volition; her own thrust –  
lay sharp 'n shim'ring with that  
vital hue of life; of lust.

Upon the deep-blue banded grip  
her hand came down to rest.  
The other clutched the silver of  
the blade within her breast.

The pleated kilt of armour o'er  
this war'yer's lap – still knelt –  
yet hid the riv'ring tidings that  
she had, with horror, felt.

The blood upon the blade declared  
a life now fully run;  
the blood dried on her fallen hand  
told of life ne'er begun.

Far 'cross, in hope-illuminated loss,  
Elatklof Esrever  
trekked trails to seek a sanctum  
where, her pregnancy, she'd weather.

Nurturing what, now, was all  
she had of whom she'd loved:  
faint dawn-signs of new-life rays  
spoke continuation of

the one whom she'd let go  
atop the city's wall, besieged,  
falling back as th'routed comp'ny  
fell beneath the breach.

Through nights in purgat'ry 'tween  
preparation and assault  
their moments 'way from guard posts  
sang of their 'gainst-death revolt.

A culmination of the years  
happening until thence:  
a final foray – fraught, frenetic  
throes of love ‘n violence.

Long before, a camp lay waking  
‘neath a sky that bled  
with tidings of a future ‘dorned  
in yellow/orange/red.

Unto th’recruiting captains came  
Elatklof, clad in clothes  
of patchwork adulthood with seams  
of frayed childhood sewn.

Her hair, the colour given her;  
her eyes, their given hue;  
her tone ‘n shape ‘n feature in  
their place, ‘n e’er lay true.

A blade a-bound by belt off-cuts  
abreast her left-side hip,  
her left hand on the pommel, placed  
above th’blue-banded grip.

Recruited, she was, merely days  
after the one with whom  
she’d battle through time’s tempest paths  
‘til despair-driven doom.

Out of the prev’yus chapters, she  
had ventured t’ward an arc  
anew – in this iteration  
she’d play her final part.

In morn’ damp grass she’d waked that day,  
amidst birdsong ‘n flow’rs,  
the clearing of the trees bordered  
by risen roots and bowers,

on which she’d end her days outside  
law and community,  
whence adventure filled her heart  
with e’er imminent glory.

A-way a-lone a-last a-loved  
along the map she m’yanders,  
taking on perso-nigh with an  
ease that never founders.

Burdensome to burdenless these  
times flow on in flux.  
Our hero fair fights, fornicates;  
at permanence she bucks.

In one town long she stays, finding  
a role as guard'yun-guest,  
forced to gain the bluffed skills  
to which she did attest.

Her armour – scant – and weapon – long –  
she finds, in wand'rings preev'yus,  
upon a man, upon a path,  
with wounds legion 'n grievous.

“Take” (the man implores the one  
whom lifts aloft his blade)  
“my sword and let it make of you  
that which of me it made...”

With this, his eyes absorb their  
final message from the sun;  
the missives of his mind fall  
quiet – each 'n ev'ry one.

She practices, in mem'ry deep,  
in a long, sloping garden,  
imaginary parries, thrusts, with  
swords by trees begotten.

She moves into that past ahead,  
t'when th'wanderings are younger;  
to when she'll take least travelled roads,  
the unknown fast upon her;

to when, beneath twin setting suns,  
she'll choose between their flames:  
the order found b'yond valley dark;  
th'chaos if she remains.

She'll be/She is/She was a child  
for whom adventure grasps.  
Elatklof Esrever can now  
begin her tale at last.

And ne'er shall she, our hero fair,  
look back 'n softly pine  
for the home she'll always leave  
behind her, once upon a time...

## A Mem'ry Shared Between Us

To be squatting, posed  
about a fire – talk! sing! –  
in contemplation...

*Bug- 'n bird-calls in the middle distance.*

You are human.

Will Be

I wonder what  
my final poem  
was.

“You’re Not Gonna Help Me?”

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

Tanka #(? + One)

But that  
will  
never happened,  
did  
it?

## On The Twilight Of The Sun-Dawn Chorus

Quell quiet  
undulating utterances,  
as aft'  
riotous rise,  
announcing Aten,  
now near,  
toward the  
incline's inevitable  
nefer-noon,  
enjourneys emphemerality...



## A Limerick On Lockdown

One day, someday soon, we'll be meeting.  
With hugs and handshakes we'll be greeting.  
Not two metres away,  
real contact – hooray!  
This very strange time will be fleeting.

のののはな は...

きいろ と みどり...  
たいよう は しゅっけつしていです;  
かぜ は あこがれしていです.  
きいろ と みどり...  
のののはな が かれら を いたばさみです.

Yellow and green...  
The sun is bleeding;  
the wind is longing.  
Yellow and green...  
As for the wildflowers, they are torn.

## 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.

## Bird By Chimney Towers

Pied crow...

Is your treasure hoarded there,  
within the shaped-clay, obsolete?

You leave as the  
ocean gull approaches.

よくするます

ぼんさい が  
にっこう を よくするます;  
たにくしょくぶつ が さかるます。

Bonsai  
bathes in sunlight;  
succulents flourish.

9.03am

Twitch, tail-feather...  
In tiny talons take the reeds  
'n build a house o'er mine.

### Three Lines At Cabot Corner

End of May...

Sun sweeps; pandemic breeze.

Life alights 'pon wooden benches.

## The Pit At St. James

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



*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.

*twihtwihtweetwih?  
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...

## 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...

## 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.

## 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...

## A Midsummer Night's Dream

A wave awash  
upon your hip;  
held hands 'n  
written words...

Bath-stone built  
up about the  
natchrul Avon's  
course 'n curves...

Eve's sweltering:  
in th'crescent's shade,  
shared's moment-  
ary life...

O'er riverrun,  
in outstretched arms,  
passes the  
loneless night...

... : ?

Ophelia drowns in a river...

I wonder:

was it her within my mind?

## 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 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...



## Teaching From The Living Room

A deep 'n dusty red.

Ghostly echoes of a yearnsome yellow.

The dull 'n darkened green.

Across the roadside – down; up; down –  
the bushes and the trees grow, silent.

## Tanka Number Who-Knows-What

Heat, highly risen!  
Energetic wisps weave; wander!  
Microcosmic climbing clouds  
cling fast 'n entropy.  
Ling'ring life, nevertheless...

### 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.

## 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.

とこばな

むらさき;  
あか-ぴんく;  
みどり.  
はなはさげるます.  
とこばな.

Purple;  
red-pink;  
green.  
The flowers are suspended.  
Flower eternally flowering.

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...

ありあけ

げんむがおいまきます;  
あさがとりまとめます.  
ありあけ.

Dreams dissipate;  
morning gathers.  
Dawn.

## A Tanka On The Sonnet

Verbose in  
rhyme 'n rhythm –  
regulated; regular.  
Heart-beating on, allusory...  
Sound, songette!



## A Sonnet On The Tanka Form

In short, sung mystery of space 'n depth:  
compacted, thought-reflected feeling's loosed.  
Through lover's late laments 'n letters kept:  
the forceful song of an ephem'ral truth.  
A lone, lit, easterly, 'n midnight moon –  
so long before the risen red-dawn sun –  
reflects the Shikubian heart-torn croon  
that from the sliding, latticed door was flung,  
e'en as it keeps Komachi's careful cry...  
The mists of shadow-grammar settling o'er  
the page still blank amongst the ink-strokes, dry,  
in vert'cal columns, where the petals flow'r.  
And in the chorus-dawning light is heard  
this form, come west t'be writ in English words.

## Lost Japan

Poles 'n pylons;  
boards abound,  
billing thr'out the spirit realm...  
Is it true it's you who  
wait along the mountain paths?

## 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.

## 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...

*Untitled*

In or under grey, drab,  
dripping, vapour-lined sky  
I,  
in this inkyphem'ral  
moment,  
this passing (longsince)  
present,  
am present in this past,  
finding winding wafts of  
all that's happenedhappening  
and

longsince (present)

Under drab, grey-lined sky  
I  
wind 'n waft  
through  
  
you-less

## Poor Choice

Dripdrop slipping slide  
sweat-bead;  
this weather's fucking awful...  
And why am I drinking  
black-hot coffee?

A habit making heat-wave worse.  
I wipe my forehead.

## Boston Tea Party Senryu

私が  
かきます。  
それわかる。

I  
write.  
That I understand.

## Long Division

Inching closer,  
sentence by sentence.  
The decimal,  
its percent-parts,  
rounds upwards...



## Bath Senryu

She couldn't sleep;  
I held her.  
In the distance, wood pigeons.

## 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...

## A Tanka On The Surface Of My Coffee

The foam,  
its cavern-gorge –  
still-rippled; still –  
in spreadhaze hue,  
marks the tide-line, traced.

Upon the writer's block  
the ink-blue bleeds...

## Let Linger Onward

The scent,  
its summer scene of hours passed,  
pressed upon the soul –  
in muscle marked; the skin,  
remem'bring, daydreams...

## Signing Off

'Round coffee stains –  
the lines,  
in dormancy.

## Sunrise By The Banks Of A River

The smell of light-lit morning –  
sun in profile; rays face-on –  
with th'refreshful, weightless air  
amongst the sky

does catalyse my riv'ring  
mem'ry banks, of sensate store,  
'n feed the reaching roots that  
in time's soil lie.

The chill of birthing dawn; the  
spacious, night-renewed space  
between the earth 'n sky that  
spreads about my spine:

it all ignites the firing  
of a neural network – flames  
that dance their blazing heat  
of once upon a time.

In age-long decades past rises  
the gilt Zimbabwe sun,  
the gutt'ral summons resonating –  
roaring – deep,

while waits the cooling coffee,  
sour-milked in s'ramic cup,  
held by my hand, under the thatch,  
supressing sleep...

## WhatsApp Waka

Park grass picnic;  
river surface sailing.  
A week ends and begins.

## On The 16<sup>th</sup> 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 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.

## A Tanka For A Friend

ぼくはさんじゅうさいです...  
すいりあいるすにともだちがいます  
からあそこにいきたいです。  
このぶんしょはむしろ  
いきます。

I am thirty years old...  
I want to go to the Scilly Isles  
because a good friend lives there.  
This letter shall go  
in my place.

## Issfet Adorned

Sibling serpent, umbilical born,  
waits in th'western mountains –  
th'evil gaze.

## 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...

## A Tanka On My Mild Frustration At Piles Of Books & Ideas Waiting

To write; to read –  
I could dedicate more time...  
But:  
I need my mind to wander;  
for time to pass.

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.

## An Alliterative Thought

Look at that sullen,  
solitary slide, stone-surrounded.  
Fenced in iron;  
its prim'ry colours  
faded.

## Flicker, Silent Voice

### I

Flitting fretfully, a flow'ring flame –  
trapped, tearing at the brick-lined limits –  
'neath th'echoes of the crashing waves of  
wintered stars, their petals fall'n.

In unlit dark of recess, caged lay,  
soaked in clenching, sweat-drenched fear,  
an inf'nite, infant voice of verdance –  
vain, its pleading light.

In telepathy tuned, vibration,  
sent beyond a prison's walls,  
sings frantic-soft in fibrous mem'ry;  
muscles muse electric.

### II

A decade's silence...  
In confinement – self 'n solitary –  
there sits a child:  
torn;  
adolescent.

### III

Light-formed 'n sunburnt-brown –  
acoustically calling;  
drone low 'n dance  
harmonics high,  
crest scales 'n crash peaks, falling  
back, awash across the pent-up,  
tonic, neural swell.  
It brings upon  
its pleading song  
a voiceless mind to tell.

With fading, flameless ember drifts,  
e'en as it burns defiant,  
a wintered fire,  
its petals lost,  
ungently into silence...



## 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.

## A Mem'ry 'Pon A Corner Of My Mind

In pain oppressed memory  
mind punctuationless I find  
unrooted out long festered fear  
self portraiture in pain  
oppressive memory my eye  
above in neural surging storm  
sends says it screams  
Remember do you how you  
felt in far off time

In secure besieged corner keeps  
an open prison torn 'n rent  
its spent restrictive suppression  
pressed nonetheless ingrained in painsome  
pulsing memory of me 'n my  
experiences saying How  
you used to be so silence ridden

Neurotaclismic chasmmind find  
pain in memorandemonia  
to spur inference frenzied fraught  
with anxious waves awashing  
o'er away 'n on anonymous  
my mind in time it took a broken  
voice 'n spilled upon the page

## Paint

Upon the soundless, crashing waves of light,  
without which we must face each fireless night,  
come colours – fine 'n crude 'n dull 'n sharp –  
to take a dying sun and paint the dark...

## A Poem That I Texted

It's raining; it's pouring –  
this October morning.  
Off out for a walk did they head.

With pub fire calling,  
its warmth tempting all in,  
Molly, through the rain, she yet led

poor Jake and poor Rachel  
(though still were they grateful  
for a lift and the invitation).

Whilst I can sit happy  
in this Bristol café,  
and return anytime to my bed.

## A Song Of Molly Owen

*To the tune of Molly Malone*

On streets dull 'n Bath-y  
I did, at long last, meet  
that girl I'd been texting  
called Molly Owen.

Her hand she was wavin'  
to me – I'd just sailed in  
from Bristol and sheltered  
a bus stop within.

A bus stop within! A bus stop within!  
T'was where I was standing, with Molly wavin'.

A story I told her  
'bout me at Victor'yer  
Park wid me siblings,  
in the nineteen-nineties.

I showed her the moorhens,  
the ducks, and the pigeons,  
as she tried to teach me  
t'identify trees.

T'identify trees! T'identify trees!  
She's still tryna teach me the shapes of the leaves...

She lived up on Moorfield's,  
yet wished e'er she could feel  
the eyes of the mountains,  
their ancient gaze t'ward

a house – vined 'n gabled –  
with land and a stable,  
which her head-teacher mill'yuns  
had helped her afford.

Had helped her afford! Had helped her afford!  
This home by the peaks, 'n not far from the shore.

To Stratford we travelled  
and I did find statues  
of Shakespeare to pose with,  
which she did judge lame!

Well, when we go t'Dublin  
I'll do that same 'lame' thing  
with Joyce and she'll have to  
take photos again!

Take photos again! Take photos again!  
I'll make her take hundreds of photos again!

Oh, on I could compose  
this song of us, although  
we've only been t'gether  
since summer's sunset.

A wealth of mind sharin',  
of walks, and of carin',  
with such time before us  
which we shall fill yet.

Which we shall fill yet! Which we shall fill yet!  
We'll fill the time hence with too much to forget....

たんかのいま

ここからは  
あとあと; のちのち  
にいきます。  
私がしなければならないから,  
いきます; いました。

*Living Room Tanka*

*From here  
to the future; the distant future  
I travel.  
Because I must,  
I travel; I travelled.*

## 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...



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...

## A Thought, Through Pen, On Paper

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

## Poems From Café Living Room

### *Three Lines On Having Pooed*

Like a petal,  
detached from its flowering stem,  
I float with empty bowels.

### *I Look Over, 'Cross The Street*

A red-tiled roof  
meets dampened-other;  
above, the moss-mould colonises.

### *And Each Sep'rate, Dying Ember*

Ah, distinctly I remember,  
t'was the post-noon of November,  
as the sky – its blanket grey – hid space 'n time,  
  
that I let my muscle-mem'ry  
spill through ink to 'lease 'n let free  
that with which my firing neurons sowed my mind.

### *Unto The End Of This Here Notebook*

These pages three,  
in their loose 'n blank-lined state,  
are, together, a haiku.  
This tanka, in its love for them,  
destroys their pure expression.  
  
The thread that binds their imag'ry  
unravels...  
  
The page was blank; is writ';  
lies undiscovered...

## Next's The Beginning

Coffee; cobbles; Cabot, poised;  
the glist'ning noon's reflection;  
a moss-green ring b'yond Pero's bridge –  
'tis here we float, complex. Shunned's

the riv'ring course of coursing time,  
that, indiff'rent, doth crash  
incessantly yet forceless, spilling  
future o'er the past.

Notebook completed; page un-blanked;  
th'caress of wind-soothed heat –  
just as my coffee only cools  
shall we e'er only meet

the foll'wing page, tomorrow's dawn,  
midnight to *Auld Lang Syne*...  
Nevertheless, we'll dance our flame-lit  
lives in the meantime.

## 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?

## 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.

## 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.



## The Death Of Cleopatra

Neferotic clasping – grasping  
hand upon her smitten wrist;  
slither, fangs 'n fated coil kept  
hidden 'neath the fig-tree's fruit.

Venomous aspis – cobric hood  
held flat against the west-faced head  
of Ra's Uraeus, bowing to the Duat-  
doom of the End Of Cycles.

Goddess Who Loves Her Father falls  
into the waiting flood – primeval.  
Her dissolution – desolate; her  
baby at her breast, asleep.

Th'intrinsicated, wawtry knot  
of ma'at merged with chaos  
dances to her mind's eye, 'midst the crown  
swept over by the lev'ling sands.

Atum, Osiris, Nun's primord'yul  
depths: on, over Egypt came  
this tide, reclaiming time 'n taking  
meaning from the lightless 'glyphs.

She-wolves did roam 'n prowl across  
the Two Lands, as her tresses fell.  
Unkempt, the pharaoh's hair, dark as the  
diskless sky, did dress her form.

The pulseless puncture points witnessed  
the paling of her ochre skin.  
The keening of her ent'rage quaked great  
waves to sink the harbour isle.

Lay she, the Ptolemaic king,  
with fingers to the marble floor,  
her feet undecorated and their  
soles no longer earthward tethered.

Three thousand times renewed, the fertile  
cycle sees its soil depleted.  
The tears of Isis lost  
amongst the fallen rain...

## 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...

10.34pm

The naked wind alights  
upon my skin upon her skin;  
of tepid tea my tongue  
remembers.  
I write these words to end a tanka.

In a brace of extra lines –  
my hand, around her finger.

## A Rainy-Bus-Day Senryu

In these three lines?  
The time that passed  
as I composed them.

## Lunar Lines

Jealous of the life the earth held –  
precious, bright, 'n moving – the moon took small pleasure  
when the world was frozen still.

## A New Year Beckons

Onward,  
pen 'n mind!  
2021...

## A Haibun For My Childhood Cat

A lawn of unkempt blades of uncut grass.

A sloping set of plum trees, either side of the long, stone steps.

A wooden fence: part-standing; part-collapsed.

T'was along 'n through this garden scene that the tabby cat did wander – lazy were his steps; listless was his mind. He pushed his whiskered nose into the petals of the daffodils; he brushed his head 'n body on the brown bark, damp with dew; he stopped atop the stone... The scent of the night-time exploration made by another creature was painted 'pon the splint'ring, wooden fence.

A slow-worm,  
slight 'n slith'ring –  
silver slivers shone.

An inept pounce:  
enough to grasp a half.

Slow-worm: *[Exit, pursued by a confused glance.]*

ねこは？

私の

ともだちでした。

## A Tanka After Midnight

In lines abstract –  
of ink; of thought –  
I breathe her tangled hair.  
To auld lang syne:  
the first day of the year.



## Signs Of Someone

In th'wake of a mind at rest –  
robins,  
suddenly ubiquitous.

## Thuh Storree Ov Uh Storrurum

The arrows of Zeus and his immortal rage  
rained down in jagged clusters,  
bursting into violent, vap'rous, scorched, transparent heat.  
The countenance above: with fury laden.  
The ground: smothered 'neath soundless death, electric.

Thunder rolled;  
behind it – blue...

## A Tanka On The US Capital

Armoured, armed, 'n fury-laden –  
virulent cause inciteful  
in white./In black?  
Insightful issue voiced –  
face armed 'n armoured fury.

## 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。

A Senryu, In Which I Employ Only Kanji To (Impolitely) Respond To An Imagined Query  
Regarding That Which I Would Like To Drink

何?

私?

水!

## At Night

The tangled, tanka pages  
of Akiko placed aside;  
a notebook, now, nestled beside my pillow.  
I sketch the grass below  
the knotted trunk.

## The Empty Space

On painted lines –

th'abstract, open, expanse.

Inf'nut, 'n long passed on, 'n unobtainable.

## Eight Lines To Aid Olivia

Beneath the trav'ling clouds, the ground  
lay covered in the moss  
of dew-damp spring. T'was here I found  
the peace that I had lost.

In nature's nightless, new-born form  
I met the mossy fern  
and – just as had the night to morn' –  
I, to my future, turned...



## The She-Wolf & The Girl-Child

### I

Upon a time, once, long ago,  
in a place that I know not,  
a hooded child (in a crimson coat)  
through forest paths did trot.

Across the moss the rocks wore proud  
'n past the deadwood, she  
did take her solitary way –  
from fear, she wandered free.

Alone, un-lost, 'n unafraid;  
prowling, she crept toward  
two grazing does, their delicate  
poise lost as she did ford

the streaming currents, coursing on  
'n cutting through the earth;  
her lupine eyes mirrored the light  
that leapt from off the surf.

She splashed across to chase them off!  
Over the roots she ran!  
The wicker – wound to bear their goods –  
swung slightly in her hand...

### II

Deep depths of prime 'n ancient fear:  
the un-pathed forest heart;  
the void-black shroud o'er Europe's wilds  
that tears the mind apart...

On limb of sinew set with surging  
prime 'n ancient missives,  
the awesome, arch, 'n apex foe  
of th'north – raised to elicit

illicit sound; forbidden scent; a  
sign of trespass grave –  
stood, with claws but half-retracted;  
fierce, her furrowed face.

The ears that scanned atop her skull  
picked up, from th'middle distance,  
the prey that fled 'n the clumsy steps  
of a creature whose existence

was weaved in threads of mythic mist:  
an animal apart.  
Beyond the wooded border they  
had tread their fiery spark...

### III

Leather boots o'er ankles at  
the ends of long, slight legs;  
the girl grasped at the dagger – sheathed –  
as leaves cut light to shreds

and left the forest floor in its  
liminal chaos – black,  
littered with spots of light made red  
as, through the autumn, passed

the flames of fire flaring  
in the wake of wand'ring time.  
She tempered, then, her spirit-song 'n  
trekked the track's incline...

### IV

The she-wolf brought her muzzle down;  
her eyes pierced straight ahead.  
She sensed the cycling moon that, now,  
its crescent-youth did shed

and which, with waxing influence,  
did pull upon the tides.  
Her paws – flexed broad – began their  
loping gait. Beneath her hide

a proto-litter, lulled a-by  
their cradle's refuge, slept.  
Their mother – metranomic matrix –  
onward-bound now crept...

### V

Honour-bound to make her way  
'n emerge from this cauldron  
full of primal terrors that  
e'er ne'er released their hold on

the human animal, the girl,  
lower back dully aching,  
took loping strides on narrow feet –  
the path they were forsaking

fell fully to the west 'n sank  
away, its dusk-dust passing  
into the longed-for left behind:  
long-gone 'n everlasting...

## VI

Along the trail by sound-scent lit,  
o'er roots 'neath matted-moss,  
with senses sapient she went,  
unafraid 'n un-lost.

Wary, though, she was of what  
the standing spirit brought...  
They carried flame, 'n thrust 'n  
threw their blades whene'er they fought!

Deftly down the decline; leap  
the ditch; defy the sheer,  
rock-jagged rise to reach the auld  
roots – rampant 'n severe...

## VII

Within her belly burned the  
menarchian, must'ring muse.  
She clambered, clutching damp branch-bark;  
she lit upon auld roots.

Stabilising herself – her knees  
held bent; her arms out wide –  
she crouched within the womb of  
forest night 'n felt the tide

of lunar luminescence  
levelled at her profile – fierce.  
Into her inner being, now,  
the she-wolf's eyes did pierce...

## VIII

The fierce 'n fearful profile  
of the girl-child froze in light  
which fell upon the clearing,  
clatt'ring through the cover – slight.

Inside, a gutt'ral warning rose  
to rend the silent air  
with thund'rous growls; her muzzle  
trembled, lifting up to bare

her daggered danger – fangs of white;  
carnass'yuls clenched, unsheathed.  
Incisive were the instincts at  
th'roots of her deadly teeth...

## IX

Baring the blade of un-shone steel,  
she showed the wolf her height.  
The wolf displayed her slender power,  
circuhling the sprite.

Circling back, then further in  
amongst the latticed wood,  
the crimson of her coat bled through  
the fibres of her hood.

Across the latticed wood, her paws  
traversed the knots 'n hollows.  
Her lupine eyes ne'er slipped their gaze  
from off the girl she'd followed.

Sapient, her ancient instinct  
surged about her mind,  
keeping the girl's gaze locked upon  
that she'd not wished to find.

Their bowels blazed with courage, birthing  
tender terror t'ward  
the other, who to whom neither  
could gentleness afford.

Entreating each the other to  
encroach upon the space  
that held fast, now, its shape 'n size  
up to the edge they traced

together, both the beings bent  
their will beneath the moon –  
one rageous to stave th'other off;  
one desp'rate to consume...

## X

Potential life released; potential  
life mid-realisation –  
they bracedlungedleapt 'n landed  
in collisive escalation

of growth – ferocious; final! They  
did crash against the bark  
that shattered for to send them falling  
deep into the dark

of hollowed, auld, primord'yul depths,  
unbound within the earth!  
A basket lay in moonlight, left  
beside the riv'ring surf...

00.36am

Rain on pattered pane;  
the wind weaves,  
wattuhling with layered cold.  
A flash of lush-green light blinks,  
bridging space...

## Just One More Alphabet

In kanji, kept  
on cards – the key  
to eddied pools of meaning.  
Neurons recall – give chase – to readings;  
in muscle-mem'ry, ink-strokes settle.

## Composed Whilst Pupil Writes

*"A leaf falling."*

The mossied bark breaks;  
the buds that bloomed in springtime  
detach, tumbuhling.  
Soon, the cold winter's white  
will coat the forest.

*"Hmm like, maybe, a fountain in a park?"*

Flowering fount –  
your bursts of H<sub>2</sub>O  
bloom cold!  
On stone, the copper pennies  
settle.

*"A cat staring out the window?"*

The pointed ears that scan;  
a tail-twitch metronome.  
At the windowsill, she watches.

*"One with 1-2-3-4-5 for the syllables!"*

Fruit,  
packaged –  
plastic bags.  
A shocking waste...  
Bananas; apples.



Same Pond

Same pond –  
ripples subside.

.

## River-Light Deepens; Lingers

River runs;  
light lingers;  
dusk deepens.

Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow, and –  
a fleet of dancing stars.

## Without My Notebook

Inhale.

*Hoots of owl-song*

*on gusts of mature night.*

Wait for words...

An exhalation.

## 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 Storm At Midnight

Coherent wind –  
speak harshly 'gainst our walls,  
wearing your look of sweeping anger.

I fall asleep...

## Time Travel

These late-night, windswept  
words and their ink-blue  
synapse-forms?  
Time travel –  
wild 'n insecure.

## An Exercise In Quatrains

In woven reeds, their basket shape  
held fast by string 'n glue,  
stand stems of em'rald green that hold  
tulips – peonies, too!

Above the reaching leaves that grow  
beyond the basket's edges,  
dance petals of lilac; of white;  
of crimson. Here, their pledge is

to rise toward the sun with all  
their colour calling out  
to attract pollinators as  
they flit 'n buzz about.

## Ink Not Spilled

And what of all  
these moments, now they're passed;  
now that they're done?

*Ink not spilled  
is ink  
that never was.*

*And yet... what of  
those moments w'thin their  
scenes, so surely gone?*

Reincarnate,  
they live  
as long as us.

*A flower opens.*  
Carried to the next life –  
its poetry.



## 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<sup>l</sup>aink<sup>k</sup>ink<sup>cnk</sup>  
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)

## A Metal Flower

Limbo.

No ellipses;  
a period of rank  
proliferation of this  
lack of any real arranging  
of my thoughts on paper,  
pressed in ink 'n pressed  
(potentially) in time  
to rest encoded

but

decodable?

Encoded,  
to rest in time  
(potentially) –  
pressed in ink;  
pressed on paper.  
Thoughts arranged  
in a period of  
proliferating ellipses...

limbo

## 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...

## Two Poems For Puzzlewood

### I

Hidden behind the enclosed donkeys and  
beyond the ponies, past a grassy space,  
there lies a wooded realm where moss runs free  
and in the rocks 'n trees you'll see the face  
of ancient sprites 'n spirits – reaching high,  
the winding branch becomes a searching trunk;  
the craggy rock becomes a visage, sunk  
in th'sleep of ages. The dog-violet blends  
its colour in amongst the scattered sky,  
as light coursecrashes through the canopy  
to illumine, 'tween magic's shadow cast,  
a river running through the Celtic past,  
its stepping-stones 'n timber bridges ask  
that you not stray from off the present path...

### II

Take a winding path through Puzzlewood  
and find yourself now lost  
amongst the green grass, mossy trees,  
'n ancient, sleeping rocks  
that wait to take you to a sudden  
end, where you will turn  
and try to go back whence you came  
past th'eyes of watching fern...

## Knew Knee Knews

Leg locked in  
linear array of straps 'n clips;  
the staggered-stain of iodine  
still orange on my foot 'n thigh.  
I'm braced for a new knee, tracking central...

## A Week Ago Today, I Travelled Through

A week ago today, I travelled through –  
for to meet with then when the future'd reached –  
time, 'long its riverrun 'n deltaward,  
obliv'yus to the moments carried out  
to past's vast sea of somnamb'listic life  
that's left to wonder in its mirage made  
of wand'ring memory in wisps of cloud.

Masks;  
pen upon a board  
(My name in red!);  
lights, looming latent...  
I switch from now to then; from then to now.

Hours (Three.) 'n minutes (Thirty (Roughly...).)  
which occurred not within my sens'ry life;  
metres (Maybe around a hundred?) that  
weren't travelled, e'en in th'sleep of day or night:  
not imperceptible but untranspired!  
The briefest black to stitch the moment... Scarred's  
the neat chronology of mem'ry, told  
to me by me through th'mind's prolific bard.  
And though there've been seven days, now, which've passed,  
each was divided by a void whose hues  
made, in their dance of firing, neural song,  
perceptible future's presentward moves.  
That briefest black had neither song nor dance!  
Yet, o'er its spaceless, timeless, courseless, hueless non-expanse,  
I travelled through...

## 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!

## A Box Acrostic On Me Kneecaps

*Down the left: TODAY*

*Down the right: TODAY*

*First & last word: TODAY*

Today was a day of interest!

Onward to my x-ray, I did go.

Daringly, I – braceless – stood

and met those rays with screws; shin; patella!

Yes, it was a day of interest today!



## A Blank Page

An infinitely wide 'n white  
chasm of nothing written...  
Awaiting ideas – none have risen  
for to shine a light

over the void of wordlessness!  
No poems are appearing!  
No rhymes for reading; hearing!  
A blank page... and nothing less.

## Something Beside Remains

Do you consider yourselves homeless?  
Your entire being perched in peril,  
poised upon stages ephemeral –  
ink-scarred papyrus, disintegration fated;  
the cloud illusory, tethered threadless on electric lines;  
the mistsome wisps of mind...  
they dance their dance to the promise of a dissolution.

You live there, on these plains  
of permanently passing light  
that leave no rock-bound roots to,  
in time's soil, lie.  
Your essence, earnestly put forth  
unto impermanence to weather storms  
of whetherwhims that dictate  
if you die...

Fallen to the paving slabs –  
the foliage,  
no longer bound.  
A branch – bare – budding  
with the scourge of mem'ry.

## Kyoto Haibun

### I

Amongst the gridded sprawl of Man-a-hattan clarity, its fraysome edges fraught 'gainst forest fringeland 'n the shores of Biwa Lake, the shrines 'n palaces lay – logos boxed – beneath my wand'ring touch; I pull the wards of Kyoto t'ward my screen.

Eddied pools of meaning...  
These hieroglyphs in brushstrokes  
bear their missives.  
My shuffled-flashcard knowledge:  
not enough.

The view of rain that leaps the cloud-wisp walls 'n wings its way unto the earth – I spread my thumb 'n finger for to raise katurakawa to a focal point, its riv'ring life of coursing currents cleaves the city 'fore it feeds Osaka Bay.

The printed page;  
the photographic map,  
by satellite –  
Sea of Time 'n Space a-bridged,  
I wander Kyoto.

### II

Eight-thousand miles east –  
trace the youth of the aging sun  
to the basin of the white mountains.  
The City Of A Thousand Years...  
Feed th'flames of dawn upon the westward wind.

### III

Dropped into Japan by my own right hand, I stand beneath the gabled wonders, their calligraphic, wood-beam forms 'midst raked, permuted sand.

In late-pandemic winter,  
I plan the routes I'll walk  
in person.

## Elegy For A Lost Cascade

Unanchored

'midst the mid-spring wind,  
aubrieta fails.

Beneath trespassing paws –  
light-lilac petals.

## Riverrun

川は天から  
土まで; 山から  
森まで－行きます.  
あすは水が  
へ空をかえります.

*From the sky  
unto the earth; from the mountain  
on to the forest – the river travels.  
Tomorrow, the water,  
to the sky, returns.*

### 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.

## A Tanka To The Rainful Night

Wood 'n metal merged –  
the scaffold gathers th'reigning night.  
The air,  
through the open window,  
dances morning.

## Waxing Fragrant

Lit flame o'er lake  
of candle-wax, a-waxing  
fragrant – breathe  
the lavenderic blossom,  
burning bright.



## 黒のコヒ

黒のコヒ;

白のコヒ-カップ.

私が書きます. あなたは?

あなたがスクロールします.

私たち休みます.

*Black coffee;*

*white coffee cup.*

*I write. And you?*

*You are scrolling.*

*We take a rest.*

## 青い-インクの花

青い-インクの花 –

空の下;

土の上.

雨は休みます.

日は火を話しと人生を書きます.

*Flower in blue ink –*

*beneath the sky;*

*above the earth.*

*The rain rests.*

*The sun speaks fire and writes life.*

## At Cricc'yeth Coast

Wadewashing out  
in sea-salt-sandy steps  
'cross Cymru's coast.  
Cricc'yeth, w'thin crumblewalls  
(moss-laden), stands.

## Eryri

Th'range running – wracked by rocks in ragged peaks –  
'long valley's faulted floor of glacial folds  
doth rise to highland 'n summit ne'er told  
elsewhere thr'out Cymru's verdant, Celtic reach.  
Amidst the eerie cloud's the mountain's height,  
ringed by a raptorial spectre – splayed  
in soaring, shim'ring, past-'n-future flight  
are wings with red embossed; with green inlaid.  
Flame-flick'ring fire of th'ancient dragon's tongue  
callcries – Cymraeg! – o'er where the riverrun  
writes sediment'ry; where the hawkweed's grown  
'mongst gathered gorse; where th'alpine lily's blown  
by th'mountain wind; where eagles once had flown,  
their golden span acrest the slopes of home.

## Cynghanedd In Blank Verse

Cymraeg's consonant sounds – abreast voweled peaks  
stretch harmonic-wreathed 'n Celtic writ. Hed'n-  
ismic green of verdance – lush expanses –  
carpet across, cov'ring in moss, cove-ring-  
ed coast that forms th'western wall. Th'waste rain-  
fall flows, fitfully free, unto sea o'er  
reams of language earth-born, and which rues th'burn-  
ing flame in desp'rate pain – th'dragon's claim to  
speak its fire-tongue throughout the land it loves.

### Cynghanedd sain

- Characterised by internal rhyme
- Line divided into 3 sections
- 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> sections rhyme
- 3<sup>rd</sup> section repeats the consonant pattern established in 2<sup>nd</sup> section

### Cynghanedd lusc

- Final syllable of first half (or so) rhymes with penultimate syllable of second

Cymraeg's consonant <b>sounds</b> – abreast <b>voweled</b> peaks	<i>lusc</i>
stretch harmonic- <b>wreathed</b> 'n Celtic <b>writ</b> . Hed'n-	<i>sain</i> ( <b>w r t h d n</b> )
ismic green of ver <b>dance</b> – lush <b>expanses</b> –	<i>lusc</i>
carpet across, <b>cov'ring</b> in moss, <b>cove-ring</b> -	<i>sain</i> ( <b>c v r n g</b> )
ed coast that forms <b>th'western</b> wall. <b>Th'waste</b> rain-	<i>sain</i> ( <b>t h w s t r n</b> )
fall flows, fitfully <b>free</b> , unto <b>sea</b> o'er	<i>lusc</i>
reams of language <b>earth-born</b> , and which <b>rues</b> <b>th'burn</b> -	<i>sain</i> ( <b>r t h b r n</b> )
ing flame in desp'rate <b>pain</b> – th'dragon's <b>claim</b> to	<i>lusc</i>
speak its fire-tongue throughout the land it loves.	

## Shumba Famba

In dreams,  
Zimbabwe-bound –  
my unwrit mind.  
Heathaze-dewmorn biography –  
my trainers trace the paw-pad tracks...

Verdant-vivid  
is the tall grass,  
tail-tufts twitching o'er.  
Tanaka turns; Thulani mirrors –  
chase.

## From One Notebook To Another

And what-,  
my child of time approaching,  
e'er shall I write next?  
Turns out that it was this;  
that it was You.

## 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.



## A Tanka For The Pigeons Having Sex

Violet plumage preened –  
perched pigeon plays  
his puff-chest charm.  
sssssswwOOP In seagull's sailing path,  
they flutter.

## On The Scene Without This Café

Th'breeze brokers  
a rough 'n cooler clime.  
Parallel, the rails run elseward.

## Pit Stop

Guitar glints gilt African,  
gleaming hammer-on sunshine!  
Th'rayd'yo risen – aytay-em.

## Kanagawa

A final brace of  
blank papyrus sheets,  
their lines stretch finite.  
Ink-blue inev'tability –  
crashing wave.

## Penned In Pensford

The Chew churns at its eddied stretch –  
breakbursting, boundless force against  
rock-anchored, branching debris, dropped  
from th'bough that bore it up 'n out  
'n o'er the bank's land-limit (lapped  
at by the coursing mirrored-sky) –  
whilst flitflies flock in clouds above  
the water.

Flight – sudden – flickers  
upstream ("Look!"):  
a heron.

## Permanence Obscene

across, the pane of there 'n here  
stood straight 'n held by bracing beams,  
I see Time's arrow's trace laid clear  
in permanence obscene...  
Where once I was I am no more –  
no longer does that me exist.  
Approach, then, future for to Yet  
that now is gone! New now is set  
'n e'er shall it persist!  
As future finds me at a loss  
for present lasting, now

## The Crossmaker

*And I shall make crosses all my life,  
so that the messiahs you choose can be  
crucified!*

– The Last Temptation Of Christ

*O,  
full of scorpions  
is my mind...*

– Macbeth

Through the cold expanse of the night-tinged dawn  
o'er-laying the horizon, bleak it sailed –  
an utt'rance 'leased from the hillock forlorn.  
Forsaked 'n unforgiven sons impaled  
across Golgolta... There the jackals grouped,  
with mange 'n rabid salivation bless'd.  
The ashen vulture – legion – flit 'n swooped  
in silence, foreign blood upon its breast.  
The ribs of the earth cracked its blistered skin.  
Fire-flame burst earthward as the crows did sing.

Yesh'wa, his curled locks dishevelled 'n damp,  
looked t'ward the heavens where the Morning Star  
delighted in the banishing of night,  
its cold ignorance seared by fruitful light.  
He braced his eyes, his shadow reaching far.  
The vulture circled 'n the jackals champed.  
About him, left 'n right, the sentenced writhed  
in throes of lament. In his hands, the nails  
weighed heavy 'pon his bloodied, calloused hide-  
like palms, belaboured by tort'rous travails.

Reaching for his tools in their tattered belt,  
he hauled them upward 'n shouldered their weight.  
The rage-gilt, guilt-adorned ag'ny he felt  
he bore like scorp'yun stings about his pate.  
A crossmaker – Yesh'wa constructed th'means  
by which the legion stamped impeer'yul boots  
on his own people, as he scorned those scenes  
which Adonai insisted would be truth.  
Yet e'er the visions came! With each, God swore:  
"Thou shalt be rid of me, child, nevermore!"

In carpentry he felt his deepest roots –  
he had, from birth, known well that sawdust scent  
as, near his crib, his father Yossef bent  
over his woodwork amidst heaped offshoots.  
Yet Yossef had ne’er built things of such pain  
as these instruments of the inhumane...  
As Yesh’wa turned to leave the crucified,  
their roped-up arms dislocated inside,  
he glimpsed the jackals jump; the birds descend.  
‘Pon footless ankles fell discarded eyes.

T’where mother Mariam awaited – shamed  
by how her son aided the Roman cause –  
he headed now, his sandals breaching sores  
that had just started to their skin reclaim.  
T’where th’other Mariam awaited – laid  
out bangled, perfumed, spread, ‘n drooled upon –  
he wished he headed, were he not afraid...  
Her skin’s soft burning ‘n her mouth’s soft song...  
His chest was torn asunder; pulled apart.  
His sternum cracked to pierce his beating heart.

“Betrayer!” (Hurled by one of th’gathered jews  
who’d stepped away from the semitic throng.)  
“Yesh’wa! Why have you forsaken us? Who’s  
your god if not ours?!” Iskarioth longed  
for a messiah who’d repel those stakes,  
cast off that binding rope, ‘n burn those beams  
to embers! Who’d end Rome’s unending rape  
‘n give his people that which e’er still seemed  
a future farther off with each day’s pass:  
Heaven’s Kingdom from out heretic ash.

“Yehu’da... come.” The rabbi’s calming voice  
brought the man back. Yesh’wa continued on  
the stony path, without a fork for choice  
nor crossroads s’tat he might deviate from  
this sloped descent to where his workshop stood  
with shelves of tools ‘n stacks of rough-cut wood.  
*Yochan’an... Brother, where do you roam now?  
For whom do you perform your cleansing rite?  
Much more than me are you a prophet – how  
could God have fixed on me his hellish sight?*



He passed a stretch at which, at either side,  
stood, watching both each other 'n the man,  
a rebel 'n a monarch. Fierce, their eyes  
tracked Yesh'wa's steps along their best laid plans.  
One watched with admiration, rev'ling in  
this brave defiance of the monarch's game.  
One watched contemptuously, hating him  
who'd not submit; who could endure such pain.  
As Satan sneered with spite, God spat 'n scoffed:  
"He'll bow his head to me upon the cross!"

Krystos; Masheekah; The Anointed One –  
a king b'yond th'glory e'en of Da'hveed's time...  
Awaited long was he, the Risen Son:  
Of Man? Or God? Hostage to Da'hveed's line...  
Each step he took toward the waking town –  
the furnace flames stoked for to bake new bread –  
were steps made heavy by the plaited crown  
of twisted turmoil fixed upon his head.  
The sun rose higher as the son walked home –  
shunned; denied; cast out – to face God alone...

## Heatwaved Harbour

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

## 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...

## Sky Lines

Through the sky's  
slip-streaming currents –  
a plane; a swallow.

## 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...

## Sketch

Tree –  
'midst grass;  
'neath sky.

Sketch (Again; Another)

Flower –  
with leaves;  
w'thin grass.

## 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...



## Amidst Amongst Around The North York Moors

### I

Upon Rawcliffe –  
a new town,  
its valley verdant; steam-trained.  
In the steep hoofsteps of cows,  
tread trav'lers.

The blank-verse chimes  
time night.  
Switch – dark. Hold – whisper.

### II

The flies find lighted windows –  
polished tow'r.  
The scone cliffs crumble.  
On cake 'n coffee fuel,  
we coast to Ravenscar...

Beware the bull!  
The cow! The calf!  
See the seals supine!

### III

A greasy spoon –  
red brick; green paint; raw screech  
of th'babe hushushed.  
A breadbeanketchup mush  
on plate on tray.

Imminent...  
"Another round!" She'll cry.  
Th'quiet prior t'storm.

#### IV

Ana Cross –  
a bird of prey,  
at hov'ring height, doth herald.  
The ironworks, b'yond moorrise,  
echo th'wind.

Moss-matted bridge – streamriverstone.  
Impeer'yul Rome lost...  
Purple heather.

## Scouting York

Abreast the traffic – tow'rsome stone  
which rangerings 'round the cap'tal auld.  
Bucolic ruins; gardens sloped –  
onward, t'ward streets cobbled!  
The cathedral, in cruciform,  
holds th'north whilst th'city walls keep th'east.  
Unto the Humber, th'Ouse flows out –  
nor'westerly born; coursing south.  
Web-latticed lie the streets.  
Ramble The Shambles – gables loom...  
(York City; Friday afternoon.)

## A Sonnet To York's Grand Cathedral

In gilded, Gothic grandeur – th'heavens reached!  
Ke'pha, his sainted keys 'pon th'altar placed,  
sends down colourful cranes of paper creased  
to watch o'er York's flock, wreathed in healing grace.  
Sunfire shines glist'ning through the scripted glass  
to light the southern rose 'n Yorkshire's heart!  
Saint Will'yum waits 'til final judgement's passed.  
A stone cries "*Doom!*" from out the cryptic dark...  
As echoes break against the wooden roof,  
their soundwaves coursing through the boundless nave,  
a flame wicks mem'ry from the hand imbued  
with pers'nal purpose – th'candle burns, engraved.  
A short song, then, for thee – though might a tome  
be writ' to sing of each 'n ev'ry stone!

## Postcard Poetry

### *To Mum*

O'er Minster's tiles of polished stone,  
we walked. The stained-glass panes,  
that stretched to reach the heavens, shone.  
As tourists flocked – in groups; alone –  
the choir sang again...

### *To Dad & Jane*

"Now to communion.  
Please approach and use  
the hand sanitiser..."  
– Modern Service At York Minster

A light for Nana –  
pride of place.  
A candle b'side the nave.

American family –  
no way out!  
Wrong exit.  
Over the sound of God,  
a busker sings John Denver.

## Merchant's Hall Tanka

Stratford-esque  
(or is Stratford York-like?)  
stands the Merchant Hall.  
Brick bears beams bear rooftiles.  
Th'chimney towers.

### Sketch (A Further; Third)

Flow'r o' lines  
writ' ink-blue o'er  
unpetalled, blank papyrus.  
Scribbled soil,  
untouched by water.

## An Encounter

On an evening wander's  
lake-reed trail –  
a roe deer.



## 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.

## Milk Stout

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

## 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...

## Sketch (Fourth Coming)

In blue-ink  
bled 'cross faded lines –  
a water flower.  
Its stem becomes the rushful,  
restless stream...

## 新しいの日

川が休います;

山は安いです.

火の天と水の土が

話します.

新しいの日が始めます...

The river rests;

the mountain is at peace.

The fire of the sky & the water of the earth  
converse.

The new day commences...

## Invigilation

In silence,  
softly seared with sounds  
of pencil 'pon the page –  
mock SATs.  
"Wenzlunch?" "Doughnassk meethat."

Playnoise,  
in soundful shockwaves...  
The Year 3s are on break.

## Adventure Tanka

With th'kayaks clear,  
long out of view,  
the canoes coalesce...  
The boiling blackcurrant's sipped; thrown.  
Lake water laps the breeze-blown rushes.



## A Sonnet On Not Writing Much

Less time have I spent with this notebook, whilst  
still writing (Here 'n there...) for bigger things  
that, though they grow 'n do reveal themselves,  
shall not be read nor spread their metred wings  
until Time tells my as-yet future self  
that, being done at last, they may fly free.  
Th' meantime's not born much of my shorter else,  
with dog 'n children – neither mine – to see;  
to care for. These routines are new; are great –  
both in their bearing 'n their fulfilment.  
And as I find among them café space,  
I see that neither muse nor pen is spent.  
For, though I've not been productive as such,  
I've writ this sonnet on not writing much!

## Penblossom

In the soil  
of the blank, lined page –  
penblossom flowers.

## 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.

## Perhaps

Poems have slowed...  
Perhaps that's natural.  
A phase that ends; a phase begins.  
Novellas writ.  
Verse collected.

## 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!

## A Welsh Christmas

Sand, wind-whipped;  
waves, wind-wrath shaped;  
shorn sea o'er th'westward reach –  
three wetsuit-wearers, dog, and I.  
Nadolig Llawen!

## 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.

後?

Phone has passed  
away again –  
I perform great feats  
of balanced-contortion  
with th'charger cable.

For now, though,  
I don't know what the time is...



## The Stag Upon The Brean Peninsula

*The t'multuosity of th'waves – wind-whipped  
'n churning th'sediment of channel sands –  
lies mirrored in the strange, dynamic flux  
of th'cresting, tumblefallen, grass-green land  
that plays its paths peninsulaic, wrought  
with boot/paw/hoof mark 'vealing clayful red,  
on t'ward the riven rock; t'ween bracken spread  
'bout steeping sides to jagged juttings brought  
by th't'multuosity of Time's tideforce  
that frenzifuriously flays its base.  
T'was o'er 'n through this coastly scene we traced  
the tracks of mem'ry, for upon this place  
the pathways w'thin my firing mind did course;  
th'neuraic starfire of my mind did race...*

I

Eve'ning's darkdusk  
sunken flame –  
the hid horizon heralds night.  
Crepusculuminescence, in  
late-lilt of dissipation,  
fades.  
lingers.

Lapped waves wash, broken-crested –  
I am young.  
Fifteen?  
Half my life 'n more re-wound,  
I'm now –  
still –  
upon this path on jutting ground  
'tween sands,  
the rock beneath me reaching seaward;  
south 'n west.

A walk a-from a campsite  
minutes 'way, where  
we  
(Dad; Brother; Son 'n Son)  
three were staying  
with a tent 'n a red Toyota  
'n a shit guitar –  
this steep-sided lump of land,  
beach-bordered.

I am now  
on ahead. I'm  
off in front from  
where they walk;  
from where they are 'n  
when they were  
where we walked  
once upon a time.

Solitary,  
striding on  
'midst stream of consciousness.

## II

The night's birthed  
of the eve'ning's wake –  
I see myself still strolling.  
A leaping spirit,  
antler-winged.

## III

In but one bound – one moment – did  
the animal alight  
the scene 'n leave it. 'Phem'rally  
it flickered... Henceforth, memory  
alone bound it. The night  
took in its form 'n kept it hid.

With gracile step, agilic poise,  
'n purity he'd leapt  
from th'dark off to my right-side. Thence  
the bracken sprawl sloped downward, whence  
the murm'ring waters slept,  
with wavewash whispers th'only noise.

With antlers, broad 'n brazen, blaze-  
fully fierce was adorned  
the male deer in his peaking prime;  
as rhythmic prose replete with rhyme  
was he in stagg'ring form!  
Yet in his staying – th'wind; the haze.

Mere metres (Was it four? Or three?)  
of grass-green, time-whipped ground  
between us, like the ink-blue page,  
undulating o'er eon; age.  
T'was in his single bound  
that I first knew of poetry.

*The present day is now the recent past;  
the past is yet kept in the foggy dew  
of th'captured moment – Misremembered? Morphed?  
Now/Then again upon this place, we few  
step onward through this coastly scene 'n th'light  
of afternoon sun – th'dog 'n her 'n me.  
I told her of the stag of memory;  
of th'earth; of private moments lived; of th'night.  
Yet had it happened thus? At all? Or not?  
A tale repeated into life event...  
But I recall my aftermathly thought  
that dwelled 'pon where it came from; where it went...  
When younger, here I walked alone to find  
a stag, mid-bound, imprinted on my mind.*

## 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.

## Café Back Garden

I s'pose I ought  
tuh not mind that  
I'm trapped at home again.  
I have the plague,  
but also cump'nee.

## Weston-Super-Mare

On th'edge of the edge –  
train-journeying alone  
bereft the panic,  
shattering the feedback-loop!  
A western-town atop the sea.

## Eunice's Wake

Head down; up; down; up – baggage-rest,  
on th'café's cushioned seats (maroon),  
makes makeshift pillow; shattered-sleep  
in restsomesnatches stolen.

A tabletop turned littered scene  
of packets (Pringles); glasses drained –  
they've sat with spirits (high [enough...]).  
Their youngest w'thout backrest!

Phones flickering through signal – surge,  
then valleyed-depths connectionless!  
Chitchatt'ring common-ground smalltalk  
about the high-stood planks.

They're off! They're gone! Away! Alone  
their seats – long-held – in tableau tell  
of th'storm of disrupture. The trees  
outside withhold their felling (f'now...).

Now nearly night, our fam'lee fight  
the drain – exhaustive. Journey's end  
doth stretch on; on anon, finite...  
Def'nutlee finite... Def'nutlee...



## Emergency Notebook Tanka

Sat in arrivals,  
awaiting Loz 'n Hannah –  
Storm Eunice.  
I want to smuggle them  
some choc'lut...

## 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...

## 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.

## On An Evening

Soul search...

A moment clear.

Standing in the stairwell – stupid.

Check your phone,  
fool!

Wasteful wastrel...

Rise tomorrow.

## 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 Tanka From A Scrap Of Sonnet

In darkness,  
here I sit awaiting th'spring  
that travels 'long  
the bleak late-winter's wake  
toward this falt'ring death.

## Two Poems For Kawakami-San

Abreast a river's upper-reaches –  
a child not yet reflected clear,  
her ink-black hair entangled; free.  
Unrestrained as the wand'ring, bill'wing waves,  
she makes her way about the city slopes...

川 上 の 傍 ら に  
子 は 未 映 ,  
彼 女 の イ シ ャ - 黒 髪 は み だ れ だ  
放 浪 の 涛 の ク - 黒 髪 は み だ れ だ  
は 怒 の イ シ ャ - 黒 髪 は み だ れ だ  
女 浪 の 涛 の ク - 黒 髪 は み だ れ だ  
彼 女 の 行 く 手 に 行 い ま す ...  
非 定 型 で す .

In Joyce-esque prose-descent  
into a thoughtdream stream of words –  
I fall in love with *Breasts & Eggs*.

ぼ に ジ  
く 想 ヨ  
は い イ  
ち 夢 ス  
ち 語 チ  
と 句 ッ  
ら 川 ク  
ん - 散  
に 文  
惚 経  
れ 由  
ま  
す  
・



## A Tunnel Leading Westward

On the rubble-rock  
of the fort-wall's crumbling,  
portside, pond'rous form –  
urban doves, flocking  
'bout the railroad bridge.

## Poem 'Pon A Photo Page

Beneath the buzzards  
and the sudden sun –  
a couple wed near Bristol.  
Rings, tears, 'n speeches...  
A wond'rous day!

## 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".

## Versing (Freely)

Tenth (general) notebook;  
final (blank) pages.  
Seventh month (last year) until  
fifth month (this year);  
eleventh day (July, 2021) until  
fourteenth day (May, 2022).

That's now (then) &  
here (there), though.  
It could be (have been) that  
the upcoming (excluding  
remainder of this one)  
nine pages are filled well  
into the future (more  
recent past).  
But.

Versing freely (  
an uncommon thing, really  
) , I for now come toward  
the last six lines  
(five) of this page – not  
including the big, fat, extra  
one at the very bottom  
(two;  
one).

## 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.

## Eleven

The day, it becomes  
morning's noon-time end;  
the time hits twelve; the time turns past.  
I fold my notebook – closed;  
I start another...

*A way a lone a last a loved a long the*

Forfeit the final pages!

*riverrun,*

## At The Old Electric Shop

Tat-tattertorn 'n upside down;  
flaked colour, coarse; heads carven,  
the bridle-bound bear down –  
the crow in the cage cawcackles,  
watching me flail from o'er my shoulder.

## 雨; 雪

天の電気 –

雨; 雪.

空が話きます; 上が聞きます.

Electricity of the sky –

the rain; the snow.

The sky speaks; the earth listens.



Verse (Brief 'N Free) From Hay-On-Wye

little redbrick woodenframe 'n shelf of stone

creepcrawlin leaves

that's beyond th'wicker woven though

*HHhOHff! grrrererrrrururr?!*

"anshethinkssheez"

"really good look"

"anweirgo-ing anweergohing"

## A Prologue To Hansel & Gretel

In the midst of Europe's wooded lands,  
where the canopy lies vast,  
there are gaps in the verdant green from which  
rise peaks of bundled thatch

who throw, from out their chimneyed-hearths,  
black-sooted smoke – eruptive –  
to scar the tree-breathed air. T'is here  
the folk of tales do live.

Here – once 'n ever on a time – amongst  
the wanderings of wolves;  
beneath the buzzard's broad, unbeating wings;  
within the woods' myth-hold –

a small community of women, men,  
'n children is composed.  
*The wind... The wind...* Germanic kin  
by fence 'n wall enclosed.

Kindred of kind kinetic, formed  
from th'flux of in 'n forth –  
the Slavic east 'n the Celtic west;  
Iberian 'n Norse.

So, set's the scene; the story starts:  
Oh, once upon a time,  
a brother, with his sister, sauntered  
home, reciting rhyme...

## Settled

Settled,  
with their language,  
by the water –  
beings who know themselves  
through song.

## Where The Whisting Waves Die Heavy On The Stilling Sand

There's a space in time where the whisting waves  
die heavy on the stilling sand; where brief  
the windbreeze blows in unforceful flutters;  
where the Tree Of Life lets a limb-shed leaf  
lie fallen 'pon Her roots in soil scorned;  
where vast the mountains stand, with un-clad peaks;  
where revant cold quenches the upstart heat  
of Life defiant, and of Eden warmed.  
Climatic clarity! Emergency  
emergent 'cross – awash tsunamic – th'sea  
of consciousness... Rebel'yun 'gainst our own  
rusrace to sculpt that future out of stone!  
Truncated time perspective makes unknown  
the depths of hurt inflicted 'pon our home...

## Entropy In Motion

Black depths burn  
vapour to a spiral dance –  
the steam; the surface.  
My coffee cools,  
as does the void.

## 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!*

## On York's Waterway

A lit'ul piece uh northern news  
gi'en too me by me spouse:  
"Yah nough, don't yuh, that th'River Ouse –  
it do not rhyme with 'ouse!"

## The Cross, The Star, & The Crescent Moon

Three men (dark-eyed)  
at th'fire's edge;  
the Morning Star ablaze –  
In the end,  
God tore the world asunder.



## At Shambles' End

Alyss, Ros, 'n Molly shift,  
a-shambling through the queue,  
waiting to peruse the Potterporium.  
The old ladies in t'church  
made me a coffee.

## Begging

Researched publishers again...  
But I'm in two minds –  
go my own unlikely way alone,  
or grovel on to the subjectivity  
of the gatekeepers?

## Bamburgh Castle Viewing

Brass bric-a-brac in wicker wov'n  
to hang 'midst ships that, barrel-bound,  
spinsail through clutter-seas;  
'scopes scout the ocean's reach.  
Of the Bam'bruh walls, the wind tells tale,  
as o'er the grass-held dunes it whips.

A-flung the ring-of-life in bronze  
'bove bulb 'bove bench by tabletop;  
anachronistic song  
on ray'dyo waves a-borne.  
Best bitter of the bar in half-pint  
drinks down, down by Bam'borough's walls.

Cuthbert's hermitage surrounded:  
seals slipslide 'n slumber strandside.  
'Cross the water – Bam'bur  
stonepeaks above the surf.  
Everestablishing the north, where  
th'Danelaw drew blood, it towers there.

## A Sonnet Here On Robin Hood's Bay

As the surface of the cratered moonscape  
crack-crags the revealed beach of tide-out morn –  
though glistening it lays, lit by sunfire,  
for with water-mirror pools it's adorned.  
Four-legged on the foreshore flits 'n bounds  
on paws upon the colonising moss;  
sea-scattered-weed of brinesalt scent soaks heat  
as Mermaid's Purses sing of young they've lost.  
Sunhat 'n crabbing bucket – rock-pool girl!  
She watches where her sandaled-feet stone-stand.  
A kayak where the water waits in dreams  
of swelling back to swallow up the land...  
All this whilst Ravenscar stands – wind-whipped; free –  
to soothe its soul within the northern sea.

## Subject To No-One, Mr. Windsor

Dear King [*sic*] Charles #3,

To you, Mr. Mountbatten-Windsorwales,  
comes – heav’ly – the halo of unearned jewels!  
We’re citizens alike, subject to rule  
of cracked ‘n flawed democracy! Entails  
th’imaginary title “king”? Nowt/Nought!  
A monarchaic, pyramidal farce  
to be dismantled! No more power bought  
by speaking to the sky in secret rooms,  
then feeding back to us the mandate-boon  
that One must master over us at large!  
No-one is king. No-one is prince; princess.  
No-one is queen. Let us leave Eden for  
the pandemonium of freedom! Draw  
the rust-wrecked, ragged chain dragged ‘long our floor  
up to be severed – for you, too, no less!  
Born to be one thing ‘n one thing alone...  
Predestination forced on public kids...  
You are not more than I; nor me than you.  
Nothing beside remains of Ram’ses’ throne.  
A moral act if we, through peace, undid  
what’s left of royalism; made a true  
republic of this flailing, hist’ried land,  
caked o’er with blood as Lady Macbeth’s hands!  
Let us all be together equal-bound!  
Lay ‘side that empty, ridiculous crown!

## North-East; South-West

### I

getoffgetoffgetoffGetOffGetOffGetOffGetOffGetOffGetOff

No.

The doors are closing.

I'll smile.

Exhale.

### II

Onychophagia –

ruinous return.

My fingers hurt.

### III

I saw the sunset,

seeping low,

beyond the estate houses.

The tracks railriver

on('n on ['n on])ward.

### IV

Country music

piping (live) through air –

headphones hearing YouTube.

I took a taxi overground...

Fuck that tomb-train rapid-transit!

### V

I think I'll write another one,

a different style this time,

to capture when I do the return journey.

But now? Sierra Ferrell,

once Spotify stops buffering.

## As The Rowing Teams Row By

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

## 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...*



## South-West; North-East

### I

*Rock me, mama, like the wind 'n the rain;  
rock me, mama, like an  
East-bound,  
Great Western Railway train,  
from the Meadow Of The Templar Knights!*

*Well, I ride on a mail-train babe –  
can't buy a thrill...  
Well, I've been up since 7am;  
now sat beside the window-sill.*

#### Footnote (hand-writ):

These are songs with mentions of trains,  
but I changed the words.

### II

I'm on the tomb-train,  
stretched sarcophic out  
'n chan'ling chambers down  
through depth-dark blackness blurred –  
we go to face the trials of night!

Where Horus-Falcon falls;  
slips th'Aten westward, out of sight –  
we tunnel-set  
'n serpentinely writhe!

Amduat – twelve-hour night;  
today – twelve-minute ride!  
The Hall Of Ma'at? King's Cross  
(No-one weighing up my heart!)

To be honest... it was fine.

### III

Mickelgate-bound,  
we wibblewobble, smoothless –  
final ride.

## Pointless Whimsy

Oops...  
I'm writing  
in a reading café!

## A Tanka As The Bells A-Peel

picking at my cuticle  
fucking STOP doing that  
for fuck's sake  
please  
my whole fucking hand hurts

## Moon Dance

On th'other side of th'wedding day,  
backache from moving tables  
'n cèilidhing about for hours  
amongst the mini-gourds 'n flow'rs,  
th'sun breaks beyond halfway.  
With th'dancing moon invisible  
'n th'stars stored in their stables,  
the clouds await in wisping tow'rs  
for our planned plane to head for th'bay...

## A Tanka 'Pon Visiting The Joyce Centre

Wond'rous words  
with their meansigns wed  
where Liffyanna rivers through –  
choice Joyce-isms  
at the hid-'way Dublin townhouse.

## Canalway Walking

Crystal-clear canalway  
cascades leaflitter-locks –  
round 'bout route to Portobello.  
IPA of euros many (Only half-pint, too!);  
full-pint o' water wobbuhling.

## On Th'Way To Glendalough

Dear Dublin did a rainful rainfall-dance  
t'see us off at The Brazen Head,  
as we sang to the glen-men trio trilling  
fiddle-fire 'n flutely-song.

Slowswerving in a rented car, we drove  
the auld military road  
that cuts a-through the boggy scar of ice –  
peat between the wind-burnt peaks.

The Glen Of The Hollow Of The Waterfall –  
streaming iodine 'n foam,  
Glenmacnass leaps to the valley b'low,  
her sights upon the Irish Sea...

Southside of the weathered Wicklow range,  
at Lynham's Of Laragh sat –  
we paused on th'way to Glendalough,  
plotting for some garage snacks.

## Our Aft'noon/Eve In Haiku

Stacked-stones mossify,  
fadesome inscriptions borne.  
Ice-stream air; monastic village.

Roots rise;  
water falls;  
Autumn leaves.

Ducks duck their beak-led heads,  
here where  
the lake's submerged this bench.

Me: Ravioli (Must've been tinned!).  
You: Zipzapped ready-meal.  
Us: Hotel dinner.

Phone light frames  
where walking-boots will tread.  
A bat in sound-search flight.

Ghosts of other solar systems...  
Your flick'ring fire?  
The banshee's cry.



## Glendalough Haibun

A dipper dips in the air 'n lands upon the twigtangle branch. She's perched there, preening. All about the tanglebranch of brokentwig it rushroars, raring for the smoothstone leap – the turning, tumbling stream.

Up 'n down  
the slope-paths –  
wet-wind; breeze-rain.  
Hot choc'lut beckons but we  
ascend to a higher point.

The lakes are both below us now (have been for a while) but you wouldn't know it for the rainhaze, cloudly fogmist mattressing the space between us. Honeymoon-marooned atop the boardwalk planks, placing feet with caution, caref'lly... Boots grip the iron staples; sodden wood.

Clear view! Clear view!  
A landslide in the middle-distance!  
The upper 'n the lower lakes  
floodflow in standstill!  
Worth it.

## She; Her

For the Girls & Women of Iran.

*Beloved Žina,  
you will not die.  
Your name became a symbol.*

ژینا گیان تو نامری. ناوت نهیته رهمز

A storied land of ancience, torn  
'tween empire west 'n empire east...  
Alone stands She, in black subdued,  
on placed-defiant feet.  
Hid 'way (Her heroism waits!)  
is lionessid-She, curtailed  
in all Her body's boundless ways;  
Her latent bloom of blood it hates;  
Her symbolism jailed.  
Pathetic patriarchal dread;  
politic-priests scared of Her head!

The land-bound sea of th'Caspi folk –  
Mazandaran; The Giant's Gate –  
gleams northward of Ērān for She;  
for Her uprising fate.  
The sun-disk climbs. *it*, roach-like, runs –  
that mass of meagre, wretched men  
that wants to see Her quelled; Her fire  
that sears their gross, lech'rous desire  
'n takes the world from them!  
*it... it* is sniv'ling, panicked by  
th'people reflected in Her eye!

Scurrying – snake-bellied; alone –  
*it* sees about Her risen arms  
that bear black-marker symbols, writ  
for those that *it* has harmed!  
For those *it* thought *it* could contain!  
Hideously weak, *it* abhors  
these Girls 'n Women breaking free  
in fierce, defiant rhapsody  
to change Her story's course!  
Fārsi curves cursive, flowing long;  
She grasps the blackness She has on...

Clear-colour, k'leidoscopic, bursts  
courageously; eruptive; high!  
*it* flees in measly terror-squeals!  
Her headscarf in the sky,  
She sings 'n dances; smiles 'n loves!  
The wind, within Her hair again,  
caresses; plays; triumphant, lifts!  
Burnt by Her flame, *it* squirms – how swift  
the vile, revolting men  
are shown for th'nothing that they are!  
True men 'n boys uplift Her star!

Stealthy no more: topple the tow'r!  
Humiliated phallus-ruin...  
*its* farce of Right To Rule in ash;  
your hate is your undoing!  
your rape of Women's born-to rights;  
your destruction of growing Girls –  
all are against you, veiled or not!  
your rank, misogynistic rot  
's't'be excised from this world!  
This lesson, now, let t'you be taught:  
a Girl is Something; you are nought.

Women. Life. Freedom.

## Twinkle-Burn, Far Ago Star

Twinkle-burn, far-ago star!  
Delphic, dark, 'n hid you are...  
Back then; far away; in clouds  
wrapped – your magellanic shrouds!  
Twinkle-burn, far-ago star!  
Delphic, dark, 'n hid you are...

[Without End]

Writing Writing Writing Writing Writing

End-less

[Without End]

Exponential

"Write us a poem - you're the poem man!"

Demanding, my mind made it clear...

## A Tanka For A Wedding Card

Sunfire on frost –  
between the bales  
she walks t'ward him.  
Branches bend about them.  
High Green wed.

## Undiscovered

Smaller poems?

Fewer now –

I write for longer projects.

A catalogue of hundreds,  
undiscovered...

## Sketch (Once More)

Ink-flow'r  
in the pagely ground –  
across from you I'm writing.  
Grow, gradual scribbles;  
shaded petals.



## An Old York Sunset's Scene Song

The Knavesmire mired –  
flood-sodden field!  
New wetland frozen fast.  
As th'sunfire lights the trees aflame,  
th'people glide 'cross the frozen water.

## Twirling Doodles

Two twirling doodles dancing,  
their ink-blue lives  
well-lived.

## Firetide Beside

Lapping at the scorched-stump –  
a blazing firetide, entropic!  
Flamelight infuses the electric.  
The flop-eared hound shiftsettles  
as we are.

## Time-Begotten

Like a mixed-metaphor  
bound with scattered simile –  
the hist'ry-layered city.

A Brief Three-Line Poem Touching On The Possible Co-Regency Of The Potentially Now  
Delusional & Therefore Increasingly Unfit Akh-En-Aten & The Probably Unsettlingly Powerful  
Nafereti-Iti, With Her Given The Public Persona Of A Male Co-King & Future Sole King Due To  
Lingering Societal PTSD Over The Earlier Hat-Shep-Sut Incident

Sumenkh-Ka-Ra:  
as this she shall be known!  
A man to take the crown.

## One More Drop Of Coffee

A daz'ling coffee-disk  
about my words!  
Ink-blue thoughts; unblank papyrus.

## Valkyrie

*Start we swiftly with steeds unsaddled –  
hence to battle with brandished swords!*

– Njál's Saga

As fraying rope of greying-gold her hair;  
thin, woven with taut lines, her moon-pale skin –  
th'Winged Chooser Of The Battle-Slain, who bears  
th'luminous spear 'n shield of th'War Women,  
leans heavy 'gainst her fjordhest steed, blood-stained.  
'Cross Fennoscandia, like th'ice, she'd ranged  
t'escape the thought-war which she could not win.  
White-arms bare beside her mail; swanly wings  
dissolve into a cloak. A raven lands.  
From th'ash tree's branch, it tells of evil things:  
in place of th'crimson gore of violence grand,  
th'God's Twilight unfolds as c'rrupt kings baptised  
by snakes 'bout Yggdrasil coiled, drooling lies  
of pow'r 'n gold offered from nail-pierced hands.

High-Minded Death-Maiden –  
she laments this strange battlefield  
where breaks no sword, nor helm, nor shield!

Soul-Guiding Mead-Bearer –  
she weeps as Ragnarök takes place  
o'er centuries, w'thout bloody trace!

No glor'yus ride to Odin's aid!  
She leads her steed away. The raven dies.  
From its ash-corpse rises the phoenix, Christ.

## Hello Harbour, My Old Muse

Seagull calling.

Bin set about by litter,

like flowers at a place of death.

Children on the sleeping train-tracks.

Th'wind o'er th'water.



Written Somewhere Sunny In The North-East

Scaffold against the spire; spells  
onto the nearly-cloudless breadth  
a melody by the a-peeling bells;  
curated lush-grass spreads

about its oval-pen within,  
where column-lifted sundials shade;  
kuhlakuhlatter of a skateboard; th'sin  
of littering down-played;

Dean-Gahtuh Cross Keys, zebra-striped  
amidst its gorgeous northern-brick;  
desp'rately for crisps a young kid callcries;

*[I interrupt this verse for a haiku on the bird I see above me.]*

*From blossom-branch  
to branch blossomed-o'er,  
the palm-sized nest-smith wanders.*

*[And now back to the crispless child of great pain suff'ring.]*

upon the pave-slabs click  
a canine's unretracted claws;  
two people ride away on bikes;  
siblings at play put the whole world on pause;  
onward the sun-disk hikes...

## Do Not Be Indifferent

A Christian monarch,  
dripping in military medals  
'n imperial gold...  
The date is  
23 years into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Monarchism  
is self-evidently  
wrong.

## The Return Of The King; Of The Queen

Re-matriate  
the Once-King, Ever-Queen Of Egypt –  
Nafer-Naferu-Aten Nafereti-Iti,  
Great Royal Wife made  
merged 'n 'mergent Pharaoh Of The Sun!

No right; no excuse; no counter-argument.  
Give her back to Egypt.

## Pool Bridge Poem

Cloud stone-path steps  
staccato stretch;  
infinite, th'blue about!  
Tame jackdaw – *Caw?! – on headtop*  
hops to shoulder...

!ShriekColdBenefitHealthWater!  
Convince thyself to stay in!

## Yorkshire Lavender

On th'pre-horizon?

Pillared stone.

A kestrel keeps, keen-sighted.

A white rose blows (Yorkshire!),  
framed in lavender.

## Icon Rematriated

Cruel coffin of natronic-ash in sheets  
of saltsand – sintered; scorched – ‘n quartz compact  
encases, w’tin the domed, culminate room,  
a plinth of deep arrogance. Raised aloft,  
as if a badge of triumph self-achieved,  
a thing of human craft – stolen; abducted.

Brief King;  
Queen Eternal in her crown –  
Nafereti-Iti!  
Stay hidden in a tomb unknown...  
Icon enslaved.

*Fourth Month; Season Of Emergence; Seventh Day; Year Seven Of Akh-En-Aten*

*Horizon Of The Aten*

*Land Of Blackest Soil Upon The Riverbank*

High over Akhet-Aten  
th’Sun-Disk sears; soars!  
The orb’s flametide awash upon the world!  
Ra’s rays against the mudbrick,  
washed in white,  
lay ankhs e’er since the First Occasion!

In the Central City, off th’Royal Road,  
just b’fore th’South Suburb’s start,  
the workshop of the sculptor called Thutmose  
sings choral of the sculptly art:

*talatatuh*  
*talatatuh*  
*talatatuhtat*

kuhlinkuhlakuhlatter

TUNK

TINK

*puhphfffphd*

Between the banks of Iteru – white; blue –  
‘n th’eastern cliffs of red,  
a team of men turn limestone blocks to true  
replicas of the royal head.

Effective For The Aten –  
found in stone's his countenance  
by hand!  
Akh-En-Aten,  
chipped into being,  
on a bench doth gaze  
across the room.

B'side a rushreed woven basket,  
lid left ajaraslant,  
that waits atop a shelf's far-end,  
a row of her: three incomplete;  
one all (but for the eye) adorned.

Time strips the workshop –  
'lone she's perched  
on a shelf that's about to slip.  
The Living Image Of The Aten  
lifts Amun!  
Sun-Disk City sits in silence – left.

Shelf slips.  
She falls.  
For a moment; for an age...  
'Mongst gypsum, tools, stone chips, gold foil,  
'n rubble-earth a-spread  
she waits 'n waited –  
brief eternity.

*16<sup>th</sup> December 1912 CE*

*Tel el-Amarna*

*Khedivate Of Egypt*

The fire of the star that we fall upon  
floods into her right eye  
once th'chipped, rubble stone 'n th'dirtsand is gone,  
baring her to the inf'nut sky.

The One Who Makes Live,  
just as Ptah with his wheel,  
had left her having made her  
'n long turned West.  
The plaster skin  
atop her limestone form  
sings convention in its chosen hue.  
High men, red-brown;  
high women, pale –  
regardless of the living truth.

Taut, tendoned, slender neck from th'clavicle;  
th'nape nestled 'midst a garment gold;  
a pluming crown, flat-topped as those  
stone-stalks of papyrus in Karnak,  
of deeping blue  
bound ribbon-'round  
in colours – Cobra-less! – contouring;  
a band of sun-colour  
clasps across  
her proud, discerning forehead!

Her Mother-In-Law's countenance  
merged with her father's portrait –  
a face unfazed  
by a fellow pharaoh's  
rending of conserved tradition!

From his side;  
from his lap;  
from the throne he left behind –  
presiding o'er the Two Lands she'd reigned;  
now she looks about  
only at level ruins  
swept with sand.

Hidden;  
understated with deceit  
to smuggle in plain-sight!  
Underplayed  
as a plaster princess  
not significant beside  
the stelastatuary  
graciously presented.

Nothing should be leaving Egypt,  
leastly Her.

*July 1913 CE*

*Berlin*

*Federal Empire Of Germany*

In darkness, 'long Iteru, northward to  
th'Port Of Alexander;  
o'er th'edge of the world 'n beyond t'where new  
blue rivers nurture spruce 'n fir...



But a mere season on in time,  
her trek through space  
an eternity incomprehensible!  
Lands inconceivable  
beset by imperial powers  
with a reach  
to shock 'n shame  
the gods' domin'yun!

A home of stone 'n wood-beams;  
of sheet-glass of such translucency!  
Lush verdance  
of dark-emerald  
abounds without, unwild!  
What purgatory, now?  
What rest in th'future?

An icon for a private home,  
after all...  
Privately worshipped.  
But the denizens are alien;  
their fascination secular.  
At home 'midst wealth 'n leisure,  
yet she is lost;  
anachronistic.

*April 1924 CE*

*Berlin*

*Weimar Republic Of Germany*

The Living Image Of Amun awakes  
after three-thousand years!  
Her gold headdress with her rival's son's face...  
She, too, from darkness appears.

Her successor's visage  
hid yet within  
his sealed 'n nesting coffins,  
Nafereti-Iti,  
given 'way again,  
emerges in a room of treasures.

An Amarnan Courtyard  
in a New Museum –  
beside her,  
posed in silent stone,  
The Flame;  
The Lioness Of Power!

She,  
Sekh-Met,  
seated; alone.

The likenesses  
of her family  
in sculpture 'n relief –  
subdued; suspended  
to her side 'n back;  
her life in her periph'ral vision.

Ushabt Answerers  
in Osirid form,  
deaf to any spoken words,  
cannot take heka command  
t'commence their labour  
in the Field Of Reeds.

Stripped of their own royals  
so recently in history,  
this landlocked,  
continental force  
displays to the world their own great queen!  
Slipped, sleight-of-hand,  
out of Egypt's grasp:

*Oh, that?  
It's nothing. Plaster head.  
We'll take it, we suppose...  
Look away at these other things!  
Distract!  
Forget!  
Someday we'll reveal what it's worth.  
Unveiled!  
A treasure of Egypt for us!  
A solid limestone bust  
of the Solar Queen!  
Our icon now!  
Hostage to our envious greed!*

*October 1933 CE*

*Berlin*

*Nazi Germany*

A promise imminent to be upkept  
as Egypt calls her home...  
But blocked by a leader who now has swept  
nearly to a rule his own!

Flames across the Reichstag!  
Hitler's hand in Hindenburg's!  
The Chancellor,  
who'll not relinquish th'queen,  
continues 'pon his march!  
The jagged cross  
within the eagle's grasp  
becomes the golden standard!  
As she's offered back,  
he kills the goodwill gesture.

On display as a prisoner  
as war gestates,  
she remains  
'top her courtyard plinth.  
In merely whispers  
of a pass of time,  
war's birthed  
'n she's reburied!  
A crate contains the kept,  
colourful queen –  
a bank vault;  
a zoo-side bunker!  
In a mine  
made of nature's  
mineral embalmer,  
Nafereti-Iti waits...

*September 1945 CE*

*State Of Thuringia*

*Soviet Occupation Zone Of Germany*

Flames reigned with the heat of lightning lavished  
over the Peopled Land!  
Th'populace in ruin; th'cities ravaged!  
Europe under split command!

Entombed within a wooden box  
where salt doth starve the air of moisture,  
she lies with treasures,  
currency,  
'n gold  
awaiting excavation...

A Red Army  
across the eastern side –  
soldiers clear her short-lived tomb.

A band of allies  
in possession now  
of the icon Thutmose made.  
Unscathed,  
unlike the place  
displaying her last,  
she's taken to Wiesbaden;  
placed before the public eye.

The psychopath that kept her  
from her journey southward –  
Home! –  
is gone  
by his own pathetic hand:  
thus the promise  
that was made  
to Egypt?  
The Split City  
keeps her anyway –  
icon of all icons,  
f'rever hostage!

*August 1961 CE*

*West Berlin*

*Federal Republic Of Germany*

A new 'n grand construction rises tall!  
An iron-curtain's drawn!  
Severed 'to East 'n West! Between new halls  
she's passed in this post-war dawn...

Across this land,  
that's not of the Nine Bows,  
a monument of concrete spreads –  
no fortress-outpost  
on the Red Land's reach  
could've matched this  
border-barrier!  
As she hears them laying out  
the beds of nails  
'long the deadly strip spread wide,  
she dreams of escape  
from this smoke-steel land  
to feel the wand'ring Shu  
amongst the rushes.

Irony pleas  
from the weeping east:  
*Give us back our treasure – now!*  
Her rightful,  
only  
home calls out:  
*Release her from your greedy grip!*

And still  
her sensational successor  
b'comes  
ambassador for culture shared.  
The arrogance of Europe  
strong against  
the turning of the colonial tide.

*June 2023 CE*

*Berlin*

*Federal Republic Of Germany*

In a domed room,  
doomed (ostensibly)  
to be a goldmine guarded yet,  
she holds her visage up,  
uraeus-like,  
proud anachronism that she is!

As a wond'rous, new,  
majestic home  
comes closer to an opening in Cairo,  
the face  
that should be placed  
beside the Golden Mask  
still brings her wrongful owners  
honours.

A century upon display;  
a hundred years they've called her home.

For still a decade more she's been a captive kept –  
not another year should pass!  
Egyptian schoolchildren should be the ones  
stood awed before those panes of glass!

September 2024 CE

Giza Plateau هضبة الجيزة

Arab Republic Of Egypt مصر

Enter in.

Cooling as the sea breeze  
sweeping down  
along the delta 'n its floodplains vast,  
the air inside  
subdues the Aten's heat –  
a sunshade on the grandest scale!

A treasure among treasures;  
king of queens –  
there's one thing above all  
you're seeking!  
An icon that all icons  
look toward  
(Yes, even the Golden Mask!)  
She is waiting,  
placed atop a righteous plinth  
with the right to hold her  
as a culture proud!  
You'll see the Bust Of Nefertiti  
on Egyptian land!

A girl-child –  
with irides brown;  
hair as black as floodplain soil –  
her head held high;  
her countenance  
of modern Egypt born.

She stands  
with her school's badge  
above her chest,  
th'd deep olive of her skin  
sings sunfire.

In the glass,  
upon her head  
in reflection rests  
the flat-top crown of river-blue!

She's where she's meant to be –  
she is in Egypt.

هي حيث من المفترض أن تكون

هي في مصر

## Wagtail Watching

A little bird  
flitters; flutters.  
Black, white, 'n grey.  
Amongst the molehills;  
'midst the grass.

## Ol' Charles Three

Abhorrent wealth  
flaunted  
at a populace in crisis.  
Th'price of merely living surges;  
Ol' Charles Three collects his taxes.



## A Church Service At The Minster

Inaction... Standing still as th'cold stone stacked  
t'gross, gaudy, glorifying, gold-laced height  
that was hewn from the populace left wracked  
by lack 'n loss 'n need 'n pain 'n strife!  
Yesh'wa invoked 'top heaps of plundered wealth;  
worn robes giltgarish of expensive make –  
dishonour done unto his tortured self  
by masquerading in a hall he'd hate!  
His words drowned out by dreary, echoed songs  
he never asked for sung by passive throngs!

Shadeshadow flickerflame –  
might th'lot of you not worship at  
an alcove candlelit 'n plain?

C'llecting coins w'thin places which  
reek of money wasted on the rich,  
giving unto themselves all they claim!

A pauper, ragged-robed, tells the world to give  
bread, time, shelter, water, care, 'n love.  
From that you come to chanting in a palace with  
no connection to the meek but for their blood?

## Palermo Canto

Midday meander, mapless  
alleycrossing;  
th'clatter of the heat  
sears th'shade  
in the shadow of the gorge-esque,  
gorgeous buildings,  
balconifically barred!

In the alcoves,  
unassuming,  
fades Maria...

'Midst the sun-burnt blocks  
blaze orange-walls,  
the pink of their compan'yuns calling  
*Ciao!* across the parrot-keeping palms  
that shower stuffy-spots of sunless street.

Slippysleek, the paving undulates,  
unused by most  
(they take the road);  
*Permesso!* bluntly blaring  
blasts  
from the bells 'n the horns  
whizzweaving by  
belligerently  
as they cruise through crowds  
who reshape to them like water!

A lame horse limps  
in service to the tourist sector.

Four verses  
of a song of mainlanders  
who,  
underneath the statues,  
wonder –  
this circle of a crossroads  
can't contain  
the currents of the streets  
that feed it!

Cracks; craters;  
little landslides –  
perilous  
the paving of Palermo,  
thus the scooters 'n the mopeds

move more  
free of care:  
there's a one with a man  
sat sitting on the seat  
as his daughter  
stands upon the space in front,  
hoops gleamly hanging from her ears!

Litter littered all about,  
languidly lolling  
at the passage  
of tobacco wind  
which,  
wandering the city on a schedule,  
works to tell you  
that you could be cooler.

See a mountain  
down the avenue,  
peaked by a waterslide –  
a monstrous cruise ship  
at the harbour.

Coffee cups of shot-sized,  
white ceramic  
klatterklink their saucers;  
sweet-doughed delicacies,  
decorative,  
dress their plates  
with crumbs 'n flakes a-fallen.  
Cafeterialists converse,  
crafting melody.

The un-housed,  
hounded by the heat,  
ne'erless  
request from where they  
stake their claim.

Th'heat's boosted  
by our all-surrounding  
city heights 'n breadths 'n depths!  
A pigeon pair  
peck at the pastry flakes;  
cats  
lean 'n mean  
myow menacingly  
from their spread of scraps  
spread loosely.

Layered settlement  
of humankind;  
habitat-home  
to *Homo metrosapialis* –  
gross-grotty,  
garish-grand,  
‘n great maze-mass  
where we create ‘n cluster!

Smelly bin-smell  
[Delicacies decorative  
‘dorn the air  
with their sav’ry-sweet!]  
sun-worsened,  
swells,  
surging at the corner –  
carry on  
following cigarette stubs...

Pockets  
of post-apocalypse  
fence the city.

Rearing earthen,  
plate-pushed hills  
of mountaineity rockrise  
in moments measured  
geologic’ly  
to wall us ‘bout.  
The expanse  
of the blue, blue sea  
remakes the sky  
infinitely.

Meandering  
maplessly,  
sing *Palermo!*

## A Sedoka On Loss

You were almost...

You'll be again.

In shedding lay'rs, unmade.

*Re-made in time,*

*I'll newly be –*

*my beating heart beneath your hand.*

## A Tanka At Mondello Beach

A mirrorscape –  
Mondello's brella's yellow  
breaks the sun!  
Turquoise softly sandy saltful;  
seabreeze.

## A Bay At Santa Flavia

Swallows swooping sweep; flakesome paint (orange  
'n peachy) peels, revealing grey about  
the green-wood rectangles, slatted 'n hinged;  
off th'blocky buildings ricochet the shouts  
of young boys leaping off tiled-steps e'en as  
some older young boys do the same from rocks  
that range in cragcliff miniature past  
this swimmer's bay t'where, with a shrine, it stops –  
see Saint Sicilian Flavia dive  
dance-like 'to the sea b'yond Palermo's reach,  
watched o'er by th'sheerssharp peak that breaks the skies  
that drape their blue over Mondello Beach!  
There sits a girl who, with Ital'yun eyes,  
follows the paths the swooping swallows sweep.

## Old Cefalù

Sloping hills of green do gather.  
Rolling dice cluster 'pon stray flats.  
Stacked stone steepens the town in story.  
Paved stone parades in slabs.  
A building built with wasted wealth  
t'exalt a guy who said to give.  
Copious cafeteria  
emanate with the aroma  
of coffee served in sips.  
Limoncino-glazed ceramics fill  
the shops on old Cefalù's hill.



## Murales

I

The calmly scorching sun, w'thout rage,  
burns bricks 'n paves to blazing!  
Baked into them, the fire's flames  
fallrise streetways; airsettle.

Arteries to the avenues!  
Nervemesh, mazefully mapping  
routes firm-rooting th'broad 'n tall –  
streets backbehind 'n roads rag-running.

Tracking colour; questing murals told!  
Th'bells tell it's ten, church chantly backing,  
as we melt beside the scorched, brown grass  
pecked at by pigeons.

Into the wild, winding nowhereabouts,  
descending from the shade tree,  
we encounter th'counterpoint  
to the slicker, litter-laden lavish.

Here the balconies lean, laundry-packed,  
with th'denizens of deep Palermo posed  
in poise, painting chat upon the canvas air  
above/below/between/about them!

Wrong turns; white paint; strange looks;  
dogs doze; guys drive; trucks pass;  
men sit; women sit; chairs, empty, chill;  
concrete walls crack curve stretch straight.

Parked cars, bump-battered, sleep beneath  
wrapped wires 'n a satellite dish.  
We come to the stone stacked on th'corrugation  
of the iron sheets oxidising.

Glue-pastely grasping, faded menu-paper  
profiles ancient ice-cream options 'cross  
the bottom of a derelict door whose wood,  
spray-painted, knots 'n gnarls.

Still yet no colour-burst! This fabled find  
of musemajestic muralment unfound!  
Which way? Abandon? Quest-sweat streamrivers!  
A look a-last behind us...

II

Wonderfully waterclear!  
Cool, aquid bluebright  
beckoning you in;  
fish frolically pointing  
b'yond the steps  
that stone-step,  
wonkyslippy,  
down!

A tunnel,  
taking us to th'murals,  
moves with florid white in  
sky 'n river blue  
that becomes bolder  
'til it bursts  
into a daylight dreamscape  
singing  
herons, palms, 'n lions  
twirly-styled with flower petals  
star-suspended in the wallpaint  
panoramic,  
channelling us  
riverfallward!

Poles painted  
t'match the walls  
to match the sea  
to match the sky  
to match the  
lush, variegated k'leidoscope  
of azure-lapis strewn!

Oasid  
lays the muraled path.  
Our treasure found, we stroll.  
In a kilned-ceramic pot,  
a street cat naps.

## Higger Tor

A purple-fibred carpet –  
heather blooms.

Rockrising ridges slope  
in smooth, crevically canvas,  
bracken-dappled.

## A Cottage Courtyard In The Peak District

Rushing four-legs: "[Hello-headrub]!"  
S/he they it brushes 'gainst the painted-metal  
(furnishing, with its flakesome white,  
the courtyard) in the rain.

The peaks of the cottage-layers roof  
about in slopes of slate tile smooth;  
beige white grey stone bricks wall stand,  
drain piped 'n window-holed.

"Slappatter-pitter water rise."  
So says the rain – firm; unurgent.  
"Fifteen minutes since we last tolled!"  
So the Bells Of Belligerence.

The squares that make th'yard's walk surface  
shine slippery in their smoothness.  
M'yandering four-paws not-rushes  
t'brush 'is/'ers/its back again.

Gate slatted woodenly, slight arch  
arising middle slope 'n cream white  
splitting swinging in 'n open;  
closing out 'n back.

The cat ascends the mossful stairs;  
the rain descends the skyway.  
The chairs 'n table furnish still  
the courtyard of the cottage.

## A Sonnet To The Man From Stratford

I placed a sonnet-flow'r upon your grave,  
thinking the bones 'neath t'be this pilgrim's grail...  
C'nnected by a river, I wrote 'n gave  
my words to honour yours that mine availed...  
T'was not The Man From Stratford, though, was it?  
Your name scrawled scraggily on bills of sale;  
your daughters (And yourself?) illiterate;  
your lack of travel b'yond the London stage...  
Businessman, amateur actor, false god  
kept wrongly hallowed by th'malscholarship  
of th'priests whose panicky, insecure job  
it is to flail about with th'censor's whip.  
But hey, behind their guard you may sleep tight,  
for when has heresy e'er proven right?

### Epilogue

*It was not the man from Stratford(!)*  
*It was not the man from Stratford?*  
It was not the man from Stratford?  
It was not the man from Stratford...  
It was not the man from Stratford?  
It was not the man from Stratford!  
It was not the man from Stratford.