





POEMS  
FOR THE FREE

by

Robert Henryson



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## PREFACE

This short collection of quatrains speaks to situations with which most of us are familiar. They are everyday circumstances in which we all find ourselves at one time or another. Many of these conditions also share an historical significance found in the literary classics of many cultures. The problems of life, death, wars, loves, children and parents are eternal. Suggested solutions to most of these problems appear to have changed little through the ages. I have taken vision from these issues and endeavored to apply them to contemporary circumstances within the confines of the quatrain. I have tried to acknowledge major sources of inspiration.

Reading and writing poetry is not science. Poetry is for everyone. If the writer is successful, people will assign personal interpretations and draw their own conclusions regarding each verse. Joseph Campbell wrote, "Poetry is a careful choice of words that have rhythm and implications which go far beyond the words themselves." A few of these verses can be found rather explicit, but the majority of them follow Professor Campbell's suggestion to be implicit in their premises and conclusions.

A somewhat obtuse example may be found in verse #144. Recently some physicists, on good theoretical and experimental evidence, have felt compelled to temper the concept of flow of time. It is suggested that this may be one prerequisite to discovery of a Grand Unified Theory of the universe. Actually, the concept was discussed by Einstein and even by early Greek philosophers. Verse #144 alludes to this and asks an amorphous question. "Where is the calm?" Is it in the marriage of the General Theory of Relativity and quantum theory which, if found compatible, would help relieve a major chaos of dichotomy in contemporary physics? Or is it the calming influence on the individual experienced by elimination of the concept of passage of time. "Perhaps we would no longer fret about the future or grieve for the past" as suggested by theoretical physicist Paul Davies.

It becomes rather apparent that detailed dissection of a poem may potentially detract from whatever rhythm, charm or appeal the original

lines might have contained. This certainly is not to discourage detailed analysis, but that is for the reader to decide. It begs an eventual compromise. The writing of verse should be such that readers can easily determine the depth of experience most comfortable to themselves.

Finally, again I want to remind myself that effective poetry will stimulate varying responses. These reactions can be manipulated into sentiments ranging from amusement to pathos. Ultimately, all this must be left to the whim of the readers, for they are the true owners of the verse. This is as it should be.



1

This garden comes to life beneath your feet  
As nature helps you grow the seeds replete.  
Do not regret that your rose bush has thorns,  
Delight that your thorn bush has roses sweet.

## 2

When young we drink from cups of ignorance.

We're self-indulged on life's intoxicants.

Of warnings bear no heed, it's ours to live.

Yet as years pass, we too preach temperance.

3

My child and I both drink from the same troughs.

There's vinegar or wine to decant off.

She serves me brew, as will her child for her

That she may come to taste the draft I quaff.

## 4

God cries for peace on earth. Where does it start?

Our chiefs wander the land as if they're smart

Forget them all. We must do this ourselves.

Go home and give your family your whole heart.

- inspired by Mother Theresa

5

Above earth's dusty trails and streets of tar  
Come walk the geodesics to the stars  
Thus ease the load of farce upon your back  
And with perspective, heal your mundane scars.

## 6

This slave master called *love* rules by decree

My heart does dance as she commands of me.

Do her chains bind the body or the mind?

Nay! Only slaves of love are truly free.

- inspired by Ibn Amnar

7

What fills the cup? It's knowledge great that tells.

But thirst remains, till faith in self excels

As years pass by, spilt blood does fill the cup

Distill this mix, and therein wisdom dwells.

## 8

When days seem dark and tears within abide,  
What use this life to wax and wane as tides  
Do not despair, it's part of the *Grand Scheme*  
The total universe within you hides.



9

Young ones must use a mirror just to see  
What place they hold in life's reality.  
In age we too reflect, but not through glass.  
We use brick walls built of life's memories.

10

As long as children die while nations brawl,  
We dare not dream God hears our teardrops fall  
Think not the Milky Way needs earth to turn  
And know the earth does not need us at all.

## 11

As old I grow, clouds gather o'er my head  
To rain down floods which through my garden spread.  
They drown and kill prized blooms planted with care  
But mercifully, the weeds too now are dead.

12

Above earth's dusty trails and streets of tar  
Come walk the geodesics to the stars  
Thus ease the load of farce upon your back  
And with perspective, heal your mundane scars.

## 13

Fast grow the beasts; on naught but air they feed.  
These monsters' names are *envy*, *hate* and *greed*.  
Fear them with dread lest heart and mind they rot,  
And bring more pain than all of man's misdeeds.

## 14

When songs of life are taught to children young,

They're carved in stone, to never be unsung.

The songs once learned will answer life's refrains

So choose the rhymes and words with careful tongue.

15

Long is the search for love we won't outlive  
That our dear hearts may know life's positives.  
But fragile is this song that all must hear:  
We have only *our* kind of love to give.

## 16

In shadows vague do calm and solace dance  
I beg to know of them by plan or chance.  
My whole life through, I've sought them to seduce  
Yet these poor eyes do ne'er but steal a glance.

-- inspired by Hafez



17

Through days and nights you try to win her grace

And finally you are privy to her space.

Indulge love's brew, your cup doth overflow.

At last you're juiced. You're lost to time and place.

-inspired by Hafez

18

Trek hard the land and swim the waters blue.

On grassy slopes, pause now - behold the view.

A moment's hush, too soon the hour's nigh.

Bind on your pack, your trek is naught but through.

-inspired by Hafez

19

Oh, saki, haste, the beaker bring  
Fill up, and pass it round the ring  
Love seemed at first an easy thing  
But ah, the rude awakening.

-Hafez

20

How far removed the world of dust

From spheres of lofty thoughts discussed.

Yet death does blur this distance sore

And all go through the selfsame door.

21

The trials of life do wash upon our shores  
And shattered dreams above our reach do soar.  
But when death packs our bags, the honest soul  
Is burdened less than kings and conquerors.

inspired by Sadi

22

Be content, oh stomach lewd.

Water and bread: your fortitude.

Expect no more of me than this

Dast I be in your servitude.

-- Sadi

23

Yes, *patience* must be nurtured to succeed.  
'Tis slow to bloom, this plant of noble seed  
Still, bitter tastes that seed for young and old  
But such sweet fruit it yields in time of need.

--inspired by Sadi

## 24

Up sprouts the tree of knowledge, straight does grow.

Lean not to winds, no matter whence they blow.

But ripe with time, fruit weighs upon the bough

This fruit called *wisdom* bends proud branches low.



25

With head held high, no faults do we abide.

The world is ours because we have our pride.

“Oh, no poor fool. One’s pride is as a veil

Your mind’s critique of you sees not inside.”

## 26

Sew tight this weave, with ardor, joy and tears  
The fabric of the love which binds us near.  
Sublime this cloth that's felt but no one sees  
It's strong as steel 'till rent by one's own shears.

27

To bend the tree of truth afar the norm  
Will only cause distortion in some form.  
Harm not the blooms but just enjoy the fruit  
That life itself, to truth of fact conforms.

28

Through valleys calm or busy city streets

The roads wind 'round temptation and deceit.

You'll either drive or be there for the ride,

Your fate's the same; you both share the front seat.

29

They send out troops and bombs thought to deter.

They send out death and call themselves *leader*.

Let's face the facts, and call it as it is.

Leaders they're not - in truth, they're *puppeteers!*

30

When hate corrupts the mind with thoughts of fear

It keeps the troubled ones from seeing clear.

This illness festers hot, but they forget

When hurt, we all bleed red and cry salt tears.

31

Born not of greed nor anger is a war.  
It's misperceived resolve by governors.  
And only when reality's restored  
Will everyone involved come to abhor.

31

“Oh God! My God, please give me strength.” I plead.

But wisdom grows and things tend to succeed

If rather I should beg: “Oh Henryson

Please give me all the strength that I will need.”



32

The pain's profound - this agony of love

The cure be not from earth nor from above.

Don't waste your time with doctors or cocaine

For only love can salve wounds caused thereof.

## 33

Why exercise until the point of pain

Why pull yourself up hills with sweat and strain?

To meet best friends and challenge your worst foes

That you may know these specters for your gain.

34

I'm just a tree but you say you're God's fruit  
You walk the earth and think yourself astute.  
Yet Henryson, my seed preceded you  
And when you die, your brains will feed my roots.

35

My cries of woe and anguish fill the night.

Friends hear my sobs and think they know my plight.

The pain I feel is mine to bear alone

Oh heart, do not desert me - make it right.

36

When young we drink from cups of ignorance  
We're self-indulged on life's intoxicants.  
Of warnings bear no heed, it's ours to live  
Yet as years pass, we too preach abstinence.

## 38

Where lies the burden great - in horses wild?

Or under silver saddles finely styled?

Are silks a fair reward for prancing proud,

Or did I chance to see that wild horse smile?

39

My upright stance is long in disrepair.

Where is that loving arm I used to share?

I've thus far won the game we all must lose

But now I walk alone and no one cares.

40

Our presence here is as a flash of light

Within the darkness of eternal night.

If our time spent on earth be truly small,

How can it be our troubles reach such heights?



41

Our leaders send us off to fight for land  
So with our lives we pay for grains of sand.  
This cold, damp ground called earth is not our home  
It is our tomb! Too late we understand.

- inspired by Abdu'l Baha

42

Your crippled body bends beneath the pain

Because you lust for what you can't attain.

Just do the best you can with what you've got

That no apologies be entertained.

43

Our doubts and worries cause the mind to stall

And self destructive thoughts result in falls.

Yet none of these concerns matter that much

And very few of them matter at all.

## 44

Love is the garden sweet, through which pass souls

En route from self to serving other goals.

Its fragrance fills the air with consonance.

Partake the scent, to live within the whole.

45

Do not laugh light at ashes of the dead  
For life and love once burned upon their beds.  
Too soon your sun will set; your flame will cool  
And ash from all will mix as winds doth spread.

46

The leaders of our wars be smart indeed  
To collective fear and purpose we accede.  
But comes the peace, our thoughts and spirits soar.  
Then leaders need be *smarter* to succeed.

47

The tongue's as a snake with power to charm

But beware the poison. Sound the alarm.

Its venom can hurt causing others to cry,

Yet to you it can bring mortal harm

48

Young ones are used for fighting war  
Because they've not learned to abhor.  
The stories that they hear and see,  
Trifle the profound misery.  
So children young go off to die  
By kids born to the other guy.  
Shame on these parents. Shame! Shame on us all!



49

Oh neighbor, whence cometh your pride and greed?

You came as did I from dust and a seed.

And despite yourself, life ultimately

Will return us to dust to grow weeds.

50

Work hard that your wealth buys sunshine and air

With tranquil days and kind friends everywhere.

“Poor fool, you can’t purchase reality

But just distractions that leave your mind bare.”

51

Go light my heart but do not be afraid.

Love has been blind since first the sun caused shade.

And blind ones need no light to find their way

Through darkest days, life's journeys can be made.

52

How frail your father's heart does prove to be

As it pretends to beat with dignity.

Your failures and successes touch my life.

Where did you get this power over me?

## 53

The clothes my spirit wears, you surely weave.  
With joys and tears those raiments you conceive  
To cloak my soul against its nakedness.  
Thus as you live and die, know you're *ma vie*.

54

Raindrops will cut a canyon as they drain.

But teardrops only cut a swath of pain.

Yet how profound these drops from eyelids fall

That concrete dams cannot serve to constrain.

55

Where is the *door* through which I try to crawl  
That leads me to your heart so I might call.  
For years I've searched to find the open door,  
I've found it not; for lo, there is no wall!

-inspired by Rumi the Sufi

56

Survive me not, with rites and misery

For in my frame I shall no longer be.

“Please tell us then, how shall we lay your bones?”

Do with them as you please, you’ll not catch me.

inspired by Plato



57

With patience great our parents took to pen  
And wrote of love and care, and mice and men.  
This awesome burden finally seeks relief  
As it is writ with love to *our* children.

58

My life and times seem now fast obsolete.

I drink alone, this draft of bittersweet.

Your shadow dances on just out of reach

But memories don't fail this cruel retreat.

59

To drink thereof brings forth a strong decree  
This mix of tears and bliss that brews love's tea.  
Passion from you exceeds my power to give  
So too the obverse be reality.

60

We're told our faith in God will hold us firm.

When clergy intercedes, our faith's confirmed.

They teach us ins and outs and ups and downs

That we may pray to God - but on *their* terms.

61

Ponder the force that did this world create  
From fusion of star stuff, we fill our plates.  
And now we've learned to fuse these very bits,  
In our fool hands: the means to decimate.

.

62

The traveled road is long with hills and bends  
Its joys and pains in retrospect do blend.  
Our journey's close at times seems quite remote.  
And then it dawns - the *journey* is the end!

63

What is this God, with vast portfolio,  
Infinity above and yet below?  
The unrequited love a mother gives?  
One truly sees only that which one knows.

-inspired by Goethe

64

We pray to God to pay us what She owes  
That spirits dance as from the grape lust flows;  
Then stay despair as death begins its quiz.  
Nay, life's not good or bad - it simply is!



65

You poor, sad fool, the pain is misery  
When passion sweet replies not to your plea.  
You lie with your dear one and just pretend  
That love's sweet truth is what it ought to be.

66

Tend well your flame that it not quit this earth  
And leave your being without its soul and mirth.  
A warm touch gives you form and substance fast  
That your life thus assumes much greater worth.

67

Cast up your gaze to where the stars do sit  
That you may learn where in this realm we fit.  
Yet pay some mind to where on earth you step  
That your new shoes don't wind up tracking shit.

68

Let mischief sleep that love does not decline  
No skill's involved when anguish is consigned  
As is a god, you're free to make or break.  
Wrong not the bloom, lest then may die the vine.

69

The trials of love are many, don't despair.

Come smell the rose but mind that thorns grow there

Life's other plan: Avoid this garden bright.

Pain you'll elude but there'll be none that care.

70

Ready or not, your journey starts at birth

You hope your vessel's strong and proves its worth

Fear not that it may leak and even sink

Fear only it will never leave its berth.

- inspired by Grace Hanson

71

Your memory is my final resting place.

It's there my soul will lie in your embrace

My heaven's you. In death there I'll abide

So thus weep not. At last I'm in your grace.

72

Parent and child are seen to compliment.

Who is the boss and who dares not dissent?

The young one's master but won't thrive in thought,

Until the slaves are no more indulgent.



73

Who makes the claim, at birth we were apart?

My whisper tells you mightily sweet heart:

As first we met we started life anew.

From then and on, of me you were a part.

74

Their gold can't buy enough to fill the whole  
So these folks eat from nearly empty bowls.  
They smell but do not taste their daily bread  
Gold cannot change a poverty of soul.

75

Love's wine sustains my heart and warms my bones

I'm drunk with lust such as I've never known

Morn's sober hold, I cannot tolerate.

Give me more drink or let me be alone.

- inspired by Rumi the Sufi

76

We shared life's truths and met the wind and tide.  
Through your sweet youth, I held your hand to guide.  
When steep the trails, we left one set of prints  
As out the clouds, my shoulders you did ride.

77

I drink with joy this wine you carefully pour  
The more I drink, the more my passion soars  
Tend well the bar whence these sweet spirits flow  
Hold fast that flask; your grace I must implore.

78

Greed starts to burn with modest appetite.

But as it feeds, it covets all in sight.

Beware this hungry tyrant. Who is safe?

Greed feeds upon itself 'till all ignites.

79

The light from the sparks of an argument

Ignite a curtain of discontent

Which grants a glimpse of another's insight

And in turn, illumines this night of lament.

80

Take heed of those who seek to be your page.

They may be baneful actors on a stage.

As when the bird seeks rest upon a branch

Which someday may be used to make its cage.



81

The wizened beard of measured self-restraint  
Defines our lives as age builds in constraint.  
'Tis virtue rare indeed: a paradox  
When youth resign impulse without complaint.

82

The bloom of *passion* seeks our compromise

It bears upon the simple and the wise.

How fragile be this fruit with nectar sweet

For as we taste, we nurture its demise.

83

Come in old sage that me you may advise  
And watch my cup of knowledge grow in size.  
“Poor simple soul, I’ll gladly share my drink  
The wise learn more from fools than fools from wise.”

84

Does wine of introspection blear the eyes?

Or brew of math and man cloud over skies?

It matters not how loaded be the brain

If empty be the heart, quintessence dies.

85

We came to earth from stars as they unwind  
Our bones, our very atoms we thus find.  
But how much can we know of the *Big Bang*?  
For we know not the means to our own mind.

86

Of *life* and *love* we dream to sanctify

That them we own, ourselves to satisfy.

“Poor fool your voice be slight. Go back to sleep.

If sleep we could resist, so death deny.”

87

Where in this world I be, your spirit's near

I can't escape your song beloved dear.

Ah, torment sweet - the enigmatic brew

Refill my cup your song again to hear.

88

When dark clouds loom, I never fear the squall

I reach within, my ancestors to call

And come they will because from them I am.

I am the reason they were here at all!

- inspired by Amistad



89

To us our cares seem great as mountains high.

Life yields rough roads; to that all testify.

But stony roads wear down to pliant sand

And thus upon the beach we come to lie.

90

So full of good intent that they not fail  
They know your deeds and words in great detail.  
Teach children well the hammer's careful use,  
For soon will come the day you'll hold the nail.

91

This fabric's woven fine in homes and schools  
We're different threads wound 'round the self-same spool  
As brothers hand in hand we must abide  
Lest hand in hand we perish simple fools.

- inspired by M.L. King

92

We've traveled land and sea these many years  
And deep within we've trekked through joys and tears.  
At last the old one packs his bags alone.  
The only trip he'll make without his dear.

93

We're here as guests so long as time permits

The splendor's not just for *our* benefit

From parents not was earth bequeathed to us

It's from our children that we borrow it.

94

We swim the seas of life away from home  
Searching for pearls to enter in our tome  
Of course, to reach these gems one must dive deep  
Because on top, the sea is naught but foam.

95

Success in trade and commerce seems sublime

Amassing riches trading on the prime.

But folks of greatest wealth in all the world

Are those who give to children of their time.

96

Cosmic rays. Asteroids. The sun's demise.

The rationale of space yields no reprise

Yet life goes on as quakes and floods undo.

This *space ship earth's* a gentle compromise.



97

Through dissonance and strife we're moved to hate.

We shed these tears of life next to our mate.

Then sing requests and praise to God above.

Yet still it's from earth's clay, we mold our fate.

98

The wise one spends the time inquisitive  
The fool sits numb then begs it to forgive.  
It's time constraints that stretch our spirits thin  
Yet time's not lost, it's simply where we live.

99

For years we've shared bed sheets both smooth and rough

We've bound our fates and given of our stuff.

That's ample time sweet one, now I must go.

"Oh no *Ma Vie!* In fact it's not enough."

100

Young hearts are paced by lust for life and wine

Emotions warm, fuel bodies thought divine.

Clearly the brain can live without the heart

And yet without the heart, the brain resigns.

101

Both shelter and a hearth you'll find in me

A passion hot that only you can free.

Please grant that I might catch a second glance.

Oh, chance be there, that's all I ask of thee.

102

Hey bent old man, too weighty seems your pack.

Your frame is stooped. Where did you buy your back?

“‘Twas long and hard I shopped. The price was dear.

The store of *life* did sell to me this rack.”

103

That heartbreaks do not magnify the loneliness of age  
The years have now bestowed on me a means to disengage.  
The liquor of forgetfulness doth bathe my feeble mind  
And provide an anesthesia to painlessly unwind.

104

Relax old fool, you whine you're decades old?

If truth be heard, we're all the age of gold.

Our bones were born six billion years ago

Within exploding stars we were foretold.



105

Away sweet angel young, it's time you flew.

You'll need some time to search for love that's true.

And when the day is right, you'll finally find

Another who will also die for you.

106

Men clash to win new land on distant shores

The price in life and limb befits a war.

Is not the world a gift, on loan to us?

We're not landlords, we're merely spectators.

107

Oh curious one, you see what you can see.

Your eyes and mind thirst toward life's mystery.

Come drink your fill of earth and sky and man

Alas, you still may not see what you see.

108

The seeds of worry grow when planted deep  
They sprout their vines and tangle as they creep.  
This garden thrives to vindicate its being  
But most worries will only vex your sleep.

109

He prances proud, this buck with antlers trim.

Not satisfied, he curses legs too slim.

Yet thin, sure-footed legs can flee the wolves

'Till down he falls as antlers snag tree limbs.

110

As spirits wane, my glass transcends control

My last full cup. Where is this bottle's soul?

Would that I have the solitude I seek

To tip that glass with loved ones to console.

111

Black holes don't shine, but outside brightness gleams

Bombay's sunset is sunrise in Eugene

Reality's defined by where you stand.

Make judgments soft. Things mayn't be what they seem.

## 112

My child and I both drink from the same trough

There's vinegar or wine to decant off

She serves me brew, as will her child for her

That she may come to taste the draft I quaff.



113

That justice must prevail's a concept high

Do *logic* and *reason* indemnify?

No. Politics seems to abhor these gods.

To mood and greed they fall and oft times die.

-inspired by A. Einstein

114

The juice of grape will make their brains to spin.

They finally retch, and ache from bone to skin.

When, as this tide of ill begins to ebb

They forward back with haste to tip again

115

My time is nigh, I've left wherein I dwelt  
And in remorse, to kiss my lips you've knelt.  
Our banquet's done and so goes the dessert  
Needs be one eats ice cream before it melts.

116

We're citizens of earth at a frontier.

We hold in trust land, sea, and atmosphere.

Chose well our words for what we say today

Will still be heard the next one thousand years.

117

Come play this game; your parents gave you clues.

Its challenge keeps both mind and heart enthused.

Of course it's played by all. Dare not forget -

You truly win when others do not lose.

118

We're forged from Big Bang's early energy.

Can we survive Black Hole's cruel destiny?

Apparently our robes are transient

A grand display in time's long gallery.

119

The reaper grim, with great delight pursues;  
Ever winning, the race we all must lose  
He smiles with joy at famine and the ill.  
But laughs out loud when word of war makes news.

120

Love's hallowed grape intoxicates the heart.

It quenches thirst; our very lives it charts.

Attend it well, that time not taint the taste

Nor spill your cup before you chance depart.



121

You navigate rough seas of grief and ills  
And loneliness from out your heart does spill.  
Let this brew wisdom strong that you might swim  
In waters warm and calm: yourself fulfilled.

122

It's kind and cruel, yet most of us persist  
We laugh and cry 'till our eyes fill with mist.  
All try with small success to sing love's song  
Words simply evanesce. It just exists!

123

Beyond the toilsome quest, calm seas enchant.

We could course through the ocean's stormy rants

Or sail them 'round. This journey will be made!

The choice befalls the earth's inhabitants.

124

The now holds fast our lives from days of yore  
Our loves and fears; reflections glad and sore  
Tie you to me by strands of woven gold  
That can't be broke by rust of times before.

125

The stress alone may nearly blow the mind

For it's the hardest thing of all to find:

A black cat hiding in a darkened room

Especially, if indeed, there's no feline.

- inspired by Kongfuzi

126

Eat me, sniff me, Oh wearied one who craves  
Relief is prompt. Of what you asked, I gave.  
But you'll be back, you cannot flee my sway  
I'm the master and you are but the slave.

127

Her splendid cause can never be surpassed.

As life renews, part of us all will last.

With preference treat this bloom, for her small bud

Holds promise for the future from the past.

128

Oh love of mine, help me this cask to bear  
Within it our own grapes which we will share  
Quaff of the wine but no more than you bring  
That never does our cask pour naught but air.



129

How nice to be astute as life we start.

Then, fires of fervor burn within our hearts.

Is there not room for extra warmth from sparks

Of embers old, where fire's no more a part?

130

One hundred years from now as memories fade  
No one will count the small change which I made.  
Could I have made the world a different place  
Had I but knelt to hug a child afraid?

131

Again we come to shop at the bazaar

We search our lives and beg our lucky stars.

“Poor fools, just *being* is the chance supreme:

Know that we are because of what we are.”

-inspired by Julian Barbour

132

The zeal of lovers true is not surpassed

Affection puts them in a unique class.

Does this mean they compare as glass to rock?

How dear the rock must love that pane of glass.

133

We know the hand is quicker than the eye.

Do you think blue's the color of the sky?

Do not be fooled. The real organ of sight

Is knowledge tried and true and not the ayes.

- inspired by the Panchatantra

134

Blunt not your moral tongue to bitter mead

However eloquent it seems to plead.

The brew master must hear your just critique

Lest you be seen the drunk one who accedes.

## 135

Seek not my grave, for I'll be gone afar

We're born of dust spilt out the cosmic jar

Come talk with me if should the want arise

You'll find me whence I came: amongst the stars.

136

These once strong bones cannot now be redeemed.

My dear ones need me not in this extreme.

Oh, seek me out you fateful dove of peace

I pray that we may meet in my sweet dreams.



137

The cosmos is the landlord of your cave.

Your innards crack the whip. You seem their slave.

And gold just buys spare time, so what's to hold?

Can truth and love define a worthy save?

## 138

This garden has but few plants we have bred  
So dear these blooms, words fail my muted head  
We've toiled both night and day that they not wilt  
For should we fail, we'll join the living dead.

139

I see no stars. I think I've lost my mind.

The skies are black, for love I cannot find.

It seems the universe is winding down.

Is my life done, or am I just too blind?

140

Oh God, please hold his hand, and thus bestow

A life as sweet as this old one does know.

How dear is he? My plea to God be heard:

If You need room, give him my space to grow.

141

Its fragrance wafts from high the distant bluff  
This perfume sweet; we all need take a puff.  
For there grow blooms of love and thus of life  
Yet weep we all --- the scent is *not* enough.

142

So many journeys wait; so little time

Which way to turn? I have no paradigm.

It's love's imperative which gives resolve

I must choose now, lest fast it may sublime.

143

The truly rich have not the biggest feasts.  
Nor do they live a life that has been leased  
For dollars only buy from others' stores.  
Those truly rich are they who *need* the least.

144

No tangled souls to share symmetric space.  
Then stars were born and turmoil filled the place.  
Its measure is profound. Where is the calm?  
To stay the flow of time may yield that grace.



145

Mean clouds of smoke arise from fires of fear.

Hot boils the stew: A fateful mix of tears.

Purge out this toxic brew and damp the fires

That apparitions deep not persevere.

146

One billion years ago earth's life first grew

Then humans showed, with civil manners new.

But take away fair laws and justice real

And man becomes the worst one in the zoo.

- inspired by Aristotle

147

A prisoner of compulsion is obscene.

The window of your cell is the small screen.

The darkness is profound in noon's bright glare

Until you meet yourself in real scenes.

148

My tired, old confidant begs, "Set me free."

Hush pliant one. I'll not hear of your plea

As neither will the earth hear from the sun,

"After four billion years, you now owe me."

- inspired by Hafiz

149

The same moon lights your dark as lights their way.

Do their tears burn the soul, as your tears may?

So love your neighbors as you love yourself

For they are naught but you and you are they.

- inspired by Buddha

150

Our ancestors made Eden something less  
Blame not the snake. It's man that acquiesced  
Have no regrets for still this garden thrives.  
It lies within all hearts love has caressed.

151

Our leaders meet to eat off lavish trays  
The meals are pomp, their grandeur to convey  
Next morn poor folk will chance upon their trash  
What's in that trash: just trivial display.

- inspired by Baha' u'llah

152

I prayed my prayers. He listened and just smiled  
His hand took mine and silence reigned awhile  
He filled my flask; now mind lest I spill more  
For spilt wine will not pour back in the vial.



153

To each in turn, our lives we both consign.  
That we may be released from our confines  
And in my solitude you're always there  
How could I walk without your hand in mine?

154

*Ponce de Leon* did think himself a sleuth.

A foolish quest to conquer final truth.

Only the spring which bathes small children's lives

Does prove to be the true Fountain of Youth.

155

It is not joy nor grief; they come and go.

This passion grants an everlasting glow.

It's felt at night and seen the whole day through

What else in all the world be counted so?

156

The grapes were freshly cut and did not ask  
If they could measure up to this prime task.  
As years past by, the juice of grapes transformed  
And as the wine matured, so did the cask.

157

We hope the trek ahead will yield good news  
Since where we've gone before, most have few clues.  
Start now and pray that when we look, we see;  
For all too soon what we love most we lose.

158

The pain within my bones is misery

It seems unfair. Is this my destiny?

What purpose this torment in the *Grand Scheme*

That I must be reminded who I be.

160

In this small world, things are not what they seem.

Or can it be our knowledge of the scheme?

Is it reality that then breaks down

Or just uncertainties about our dreams?

161

How grand a world, where symmetry once rang

Simplicity not seen since the *Big Bang*.

A closer look now complicates the mix.

Alas, there never was pure *Yin and Yang*.



162

Are yours to you, as dear as mine to me  
That when they leave, we drink a bitter tea?  
Yet as the ripened tea reaches our cup  
Then once again, we feel the need to be.

## 163

The darkened sky bears forth one star that reigns

A guide through the profound and the inane.

I live my hopes and fears but at day's end,

I then can rest beneath that star's domain.

164

My here and now abides an egg not hatched

This world's still full of doors I can't unlatch.

I watch the sun and stars with feeble eyes

Then curse my itch, for I'm not up to scratch.

## 164(2)

Had I but known the jug would bottom-out,  
Oh, would I then have ever tipped the spout?  
Or would I've kept my heart and quenched my thirst  
With tea, that I might hold my mind and doubts.

165

As I approach, to open my last door  
More lucid seem the paths I've walked before  
My mind appears ajar to human truth  
So please, help me to know why we have war.

166

Bent space, black stars: they beg analysis

So let us take a look in this abyss

Once you accept space voids are not devoid,

Then wearing stripes with plaid won't seem amiss.

Einstein

167

Of all the melodies that Nature's heard,  
There is a verse crooned by one special bird.  
What powers be? I'm fast in its embrace  
My haven then from worlds that seem absurd.

168

I've felt your flame and breathed in the sublime

Its fragrance is a part of life's sweet prime.

Where else on all the earth can it be found?

I'll not trade this for any extra time.



169

Oh, sweet and gentle spirit walking free

No longer on your bed of misery.

However sad I feel that you're afar

No further than a heartbeat will you be.

170

A paradox is worldwide unity

To minions flying flags of fervency.

They must think walls of stone and steel a fix:

To shield us from our neighbors' misery.

171

I have the fabled lamp within my reach  
To learn of life and love and know of each.  
And thus is seen the modest life suffice  
'Lest there be naught but ignorance to preach.

172

Of those who've come before, we're all a part

Like it or not, we daily ride their carts.

And so we burn from fires we did not light;

Yet too, we drink from wells we did not start.

173

The chaff protects young seeds from springtime freeze

But neither thrives if one contracts disease.

In time the chaff dries up and blows away

Am I a fool or do I feel a breeze.

174

It's just a game: a win and then a loss.

When we were small, our parents were the boss

Then such evolved a paradox of life

Our child is now the big rhinoceros.

175

The road is rough; the day's not always bright  
Sometimes it seems you'll never see sunlight.  
No matter if you think you can or can't  
You soon find out that either way you're right.

176

The seeds of earth arose as stars did die  
So we're in debt to heaven's tempered cry.  
For most of what we see upon the land  
Depends upon what happens in the sky.



177

We hope our privileges don't overreach  
Lest comes the day when misplaced values teach  
That *privilege* comes before our *principles*.  
If that be true, take heed; we'll soon lose each!  
Inspired by D. Eisenhower

178

This vicious dragon lives but must be slain.

He feeds on precious blood from human veins.

Needs be that all mankind retire war

'Lest the whole earth becomes dragon domain.

179

True peace of mind yields only rare access.

Perhaps we need to grow to thus progress.

Whereas success scarce brings a happy soul

So happiness will bring with it success.

180

The cloudy skies of life rain sentient tears.

Beyond all right and wrong rests love sincere

Come meet me now, we'll feast upon our prize

That scars of bygone times will not adhere.

Inspired by A. Schweitzer

181

There'll be no now should your heart cease to play

And in my soul, there'll be no more today.

Tomorrow too will never come to pass

My life will be just dreams of yesterday.

## 182

The stars at night have seen two souls in mirth  
They've watched us dance and to our love give birth.  
Forbid the night, stars rise to see just one  
The next night they'll see naught but dust on earth.

183

It's not the way we planned that our ship sail  
Alas, it's not immune to storms and gales.  
For they sink boats and we may be their mark  
Or can we trim our sails and thus prevail?

184

So close to me, you are my beating heart  
And when by destiny I do depart  
The space between us then will close to naught.  
And only time will then keep us apart.



185

Wherever I may go, I feel you near  
We taught each other life through joy and tears  
How precious be the time we talk and touch  
For we have left only a few more years.

186

It matters not that others know my mind  
Or know the words my pen tries to define  
My fear is that I leave this humble life  
And never come to know myself in kind.

187

Your idle thoughts that never come to pass  
May be sweet blooms within your mind's morass.  
Forbid that rabid weeds will plant their seed  
Open your doors that weeds will not amass

188

Be kinder than needs be to folks you greet  
For they too have demons, oft bittersweet.  
Their dreams and their worries may cloud their way  
Yet both of you learn, when by chance you meet.