

THE SILVER ROSE

22nd-29th November 1998

*Being an account of a tour of England
In the last week of November, 1998*

MONDAY
Portsmouth – Chichester

LANDFALL

I am back from long & lonely exiles
In foreign climes both beautiful & bleak,
To travel the length of these Western Isles
A silver sonneteer!

Through one week seek
Old-fashion'd romantic rebellion
That last bastion of self-expression

I must quest from this heart of the Solent
To misty high lakelands, where aching grows,
A little bloom as yet unpluck'd by hand
Of silver sonneteer!

Some sister rose
Mixing ha'pennies of taking life easy
With music & a modern odyssey!

AVE ENGLAND!

Have you ever seen Cumbria clad in snow
Or Brighton's beaches been in summer's easy glow
& have you ever heard the Cambridge matin bells
Or felt your senses stirr'd when England's anthem swells?

Did you drink the ale brewed for the northern mills
Or watch seafarers sail from Whitby's salty sills
& did you ever feed your thirst in Cornish Springs
Or take the time to read through histories of kings?

Have you ever pass'd an afternoon at Lords
Or watch'd a happy cast a-tread Adelphi's boards
& have you ever cheer'd the horses at Aintree
Or as a bargeman steer'd the waters of the Lea

To a troubador with liberty come range this fabl'd land
The English call their own, set sail for Portsmouth strand!

50P BOOKSHOP

In the heart of the Maritime City,
On Albert Road, still trades the treasure store
Where first found I those gems of poetry,
Little jewels of literary lore.

As I disturb the silence of that room
Bookseller barely glances from the page,
The musty smell of leather-bound volume
After volume...

shelf-stack'd, floor-piled...

...the sage

Deems sweeter than perfume of a lover.

I find, buried, a long-forgotten tome,
Blow off the dust in clouds from its cover,
To chance on a book on the sonnet form!

'Tis such monumental moments as these
Which sat my craft drifting on mighty seas.

MODERN LIFE

At this stage of mankind's evolution,
We live in an age of air pollution,
Fat-cats & taxes, taxi fares, faxes,
Serial killers, silky leg waxes,
Condoms, modems, gimmicks, gadgets, gizmos
Two rubber ducks & comic book heroes,
Football, rock & roll, catwalk, movie stars,
Recession, depression & wonder bras,
Four packs & prozac, pylon countryside,
Anarchist daughter, schoolboy suicide,
Just-add-water, slaughter of Mother Earth
Death of religion & occult rebirth,
Not one inch left of this globe to explore,
The whole world itchin' for a third world war...

ON THE DOLE

All the artists would be forced to enrol
Without those wages the taxpayers share,
But life sure stinks when you doss on the dole
Like a whiff of Cherie Blair's underwear.

It's great work if the pride will allow it,
Eighty pounds sterlin' for signin' your name,
As an idle hour on state benefit
Sure beats the dumb humdrum of workin' game.

I wait an hour in the soul-sapping queue,
Watching the wraiths to while away the while,
Cruise my way through a stupid interview,
Then sign on the line, & spurt out, with a smile,

*"Ask not what I can do for my country,
But what can my countrymen do for me."*

ME

I love the smell of garlic on mi fingers
& The Raven by Edgar Allen Poe
Can't stand a night of karaoke singers
Or the pain after stubbin' mi big toe

I'm noble when defusing a punch-up
Or savin' spiders from a water-hole
I get angry when chippies charge for ketchup
Or Burnley losing to a stupid goal

It's silly watching synchronised swimmers
& dafter when we grow a milk moustache
It's mellow trimming lawns with new strimmers
& buzzing when pockets cough-up lost cash

'Cos when i'm not writing mi poetry
The little things in life are what make me!

IN THE ZONE

When you're in the zone
Every second turns to poesy
Those tramps sat in the park
Were they discussing Plato?

What is it about life?
She seems to twist & turn
Through shadow & sun
Without a pause, relentless...

There are those who live & those who just exist
When realizing our natures
It is the lone individual which moves the age
Within the solitude of his page

As stones hold the sun's heat long after it is gone
My poesis here forever shall remain

PORTSMOUTH & SOUTHSEA

As the Starbird completes his embassy,
Beneath vibrant horizon she shall nest,
The sunken copper of a lilac sky
Dwindles to a band, hued as the harvest.

Lady Moon's silver filters through evening,
People wait patiently for the late train;
Up pacing platforms, sat calmly reading,
Smoking a cigarette, talking of rain.

Over the tannoy a strain'd southern drawl
Heralds the five forty-five to Brighton,
Click-clack down the track train rocks to the roll,
Then slows....

& into its toilet I am gone.

Excellently ticketless & groovy,
Me in the mirror the in-flight movie!

THE ANCYENT ART OF MINSTRELSIE

I check the clientele of Chichester;
Well dress'd, good-manners, in warm harvest health,
Appearing to me, somewhat, much richer
Than most in culture, demeanour & wealth.

I beg a lucky penny, set up stall,
Flagstone the hat as to enthrall the coin,
Tune the guitar so songs shall not appal
When crooning & psychapiracy join...

"Scusa... I am a penniless poet!"
Showering shuffle-pockets with hot curses,
"Hey blondie, hmmm... nice ass... can I touch it?"
Deftly loosens the birds' passing purses,

The price of a modern-day troubadour,
Raking the evening's takings from the floor.

THE ESOTERIC ART OF BASS GUITAR

My essential thoughts on playin' the bass
Are explore the depths of your greatest riffs,
Learn moves, grooves, scales, styles, patterns, chords & grace,
Tune up before you skin-up pure skunk spliffs,
It's not the note count that counts it's the space,
Music must mean more than money & health,
Root-notes-while-U-wait, Blues, Funk, Slap, Fretless,
Find the best band (don't be dust on the shelf),
Embrace the lifestyle of bass to excess,
To influence be influenced yourself;

Pepperland panache is the purest Paul,
My Generation's Entwistle solo,
Jack Bruce on Berlin, MDM-amor,
Flea's lightning groove & Mani's mellow roll.

THE BIRTH OF BRITPOP - 1994

Far from the electro-pop of the forgettable eighties
Resin £15 an eighth, pills a tenner in the clubs,
Acid tabs £2.50 a tab, skunk £25 on yer eighth,
Scarlet coat in *Schindlers*, *Shawshank's* hole in the wall
A needle stickin out of Uma Thurman's chest...
Barbara Windsor became Peggy Mitchell
Spice girls, Channel Tunnel & the Lottery born,
Then Kurt Cobain goes & blows his head off
A few days later Oasis release Supersonic
So grunge was dead & Britpop had been born
Blur's new-mod *Parklife*, Pulp's glitzy-disco wisdom
Honky-tonk Supergrass, Dodgy's delicious optimism of
Ride's shoegazing, Prodigy's neo-punk technotronics
& The Stone Roses, god bless 'em, were recordin'...

ARRESTED IN CHICHESTER

I gasp to the swish of the golden stream,
Pissing pretty patterns upon the wall,
My breath interspersed with the risin stream,
I smell another shadow, six feet tall.

"Whaddaya fink ya bleedin doin mate!"

I turn...

see a nipple-head pig in blue,
Piss on his shoes, snake shake & calmly wait
For the old,

*"Roit son, oim arrestin you,
Anyfink you say may be...blah, blah, blah..."*

The police don't appreciate the poet,
Too hot to handle, Tunguskan star.

"Show some respect!"

"Hey Porky go blow it up yer brown bacon ass!"

My lawlessness
Breeds the glove <ping> & pride in nakedness.

LINES CARVED INTO A CELL WALL

I shall be true when the land's jurisdiction
Has shackl'd my liberty, chain'd my free-will
However they fight me, with famine & friction
Imprison'd & beaten I'll be myself still

I shall oppose them with all of my beauty
For while there is beauty then all is not lost
Tender emotion means more than their mercy
As liberty onto their conscience is toss'd

I shall stand proud when the soldiers are coming
Inviting their snipers to aim at my chest
Play the flute smoothly to sooth the crude drumming
Notes lulling the rifles, *"Come lay them to rest!"*

Only those who break not the laws of this Queendom
May truly castigate me & castrate my freedom!

CONSTABLE CUNT-STUBBLE

The slow, squeaky screech of the door's creaking
Wakes me from dreaming, my sleepy eyes stare,
Slowly behold the Duty Sarge sneaking
To my cell, her Autumnal Auburn hair
Wild rivers of lusty, flowing l'amore.

There's something so sexy about uniforms,
Especially when crumpl'd on the floor.

She is a sea of Venus freed from storms

Warm flesh arouses is in my cold bed,
She whispers the sonnet carv'd into wall,

"I've never been with a poet!"

she said

As she swarm'd all over me, after all
I had no courage, nor right, to stop her,
For who dare risk fucking with a copper.

TUESDAY

Chichester- Brighton

INCARCERATED

Time has swung swift to this un-noticed hour
here is a shift in her most dearest care
now at the dawn of age I am aware
little of life is truly in our power.
O for a lizard & a wizard tower!
to launch a Pegasus on swooning air
far from parades of this, the daily wear,
when little lives, in an instant, grow sour
to give so much, to give & give some more,
to strive in flux, to strive with writhing soul,
to banish from the mind the thoughts that gnaw
to keep the faith when others may lose theirs
& heed an inner call, however small,
shall set a person right in life's affairs?

LAWBREAKER

The bright young thing of the court-room upstood,
Poised to defend with the best of his charm,
Rebel eyes burning bright beneath a hood,
Opens his speech with an elegant

“Ma’am,

*‘Tis not I who stand on trial here today
But my mistress muse, temptress dragoness,
I follow her blind down the poet’s way
& if poetry be crime I confess
To a life of crime...”*

As penalties fix

The fruit of my minstrelsie pays what Im fined!

The poet survives on the food that he nicks;
Boots, Tesco’s & Woolworths - we slyly wind,
Lift rum, ham sandwich, grab some pick n mix,
Bypass the tills...

& leave those crimes behind!

THE SHORE

How soft the waves break on this golden sand
Before receding into whispering sea,
Washing the beach, leave a pink, twinkling band
Where we stroll in autumn serenity

The sea’s salty scent & spray soothe the core
Through rustic Felpham’s marine lanes I make,
Whose hush’d serendipity by the shore
Inspired the mystic visionary, Blake.

In the misty distance the salient
Headlands crown the curvature of the bay,
The sea rolls away, land stands defiant,
Shale-splash’d, hay-thatch’d cottages line the way.

Such mellowness descends as white waves roll,
From sea meadows, murmuring to my soul.

DAYTRIPPER

I pause in my stroll, roll up a smoke
& settle these stoned eyes upon the sea,
Smoking down a joint, drawing the last toke
I think its time to drop that LSD.

As cellophane unwraps I take great care
Not to touch the blotting with my fingers
Holding the edges I bite off my 'dare'
Remember mad shit this bite must bring us....

*Spinning, staring into abyssal eyes
Of my fellow man, together we are
Unity, to see Universal skies
O'er Astral ocean, 'neath gyring Lodestar*

As the acid dissolves upon my tongue
I smile miles wide, for real this stuff feels strong!

FUNKY LITTLE SPACESHIP

As a sleek, silver-spoon-shaped moon-ship screams
Out of an opal, cosmic psychasky,
Our atom streams prised by these particle beams
Through incandescent atmosphere we fly.

We supersoar the starry highways vast,
Staring in wonder at each giant world,
Until a barren planet reach'd at last-

Around the landing site a desert swirled.
The city is metal and cavernous,
Gibberish grunts we cannot understand,
Sick sexperiments performed upon us -
An alien in an alien land.

& now, as flash of lucid light did flare,
I found myself in slowfall through the air.

TRAINING IN THE ART OF FARE EVASION

Landing in Bognor Regis in a daze
The time has come for me to make the fade
East up to Brighton ...

 Only a fool pays
The full fare, so in order to evade
The barrier grunts, I research & buy
A one-stop single, saving sev'ral pound!

As along the line nine carriages fly
My conductor is commencing her round.

The ticket is check'd, I move to first class
Where the face that has jump'd a thousand trains
Gazes smugly upon me through the glass,

The pane awash with cool November rains.

How life is a rush when lived through one's wits,
Like catching the Bern-bound train from Colditz!

BRIGHTON PROMENADE

Less than an hour's ride from London wind the bustling Brighton Lanes,
On display were T-shirts, vests, oriental eats, florists, flatcaps & funky beats,
Further still the shlinky streets were laden with bookshops & babes,
Socks, calendars, creams & rings & everyone flitting around like schmetterlings.

I walked through the exotic Pavilion Gardens deeper into the narrow streets
Past the vinyl hives & the mopeds, botanical lives & electric threads,
flea markets, & duvet dappled beds as to my ears swept the sea's dull roar.
Brighthelmstone - pills, thrills, pubs, clubs, stars, bars, bags, slags, scarves & cars

Onto the beach I tarried where waves crashed in onto the wet, stony sands
Only the gulls were at play by a grey-haired old geezer with scarf & beret.
This is why I travel, for moments like these, melodic music & a warm seabreeze,

 I glide barefoot along the promenade to a skeletal relic
Where barefoot on the stones, quaffing beer beside the Pier,
 I watched the gull fleet sail the spangled wave.

SUNDOWN

As the robes of evenfall wrap around
I stand by the West Pier of Brighton
The crystal waters of the Selsey Sound
Sparkling beneath a gently fading sun

Lady Moon draws in her silver twilight
Lulls Mother Earth to dream a lullaby
I sigh, & hear in my own heart's delight
The song of the silverman'd Prince of Sky;

*"As men bridge mighty rivers, so shall thought
Build sweeping causeways between lands of gold
Or crude, hopeful crafts to keep them afloat
On Unfathomable Oceans of old!"*

How bright beam Pegasi come close of day
Arcing across a creamy Milky Way.

THE LAST OF THE GREAT WHITE PEGASI

"Silvermane, O Silvermane, fly, fly, fly!"
There is a sadness mellowing thine eye
Looking upon the lands thy fathers knew,
Where once the Gryphons & the Dragons flew.

But now there is a change upon the breeze,
The heap'd white ice slow-melting into seas,
Our time on Earth is slipping with the snow
Upon the slopes of Kilimanjaro!

Her wings are caught upon a sudden gust
The oil refineries are wrackd with rust
Man's greed for gold, the brotherhood of trade,
The need for luxury fore'er displayed,

Bind them together & their driving force
Has set our planet on a lethal course!

ON ONE

For sunny Brighton read London-by-Sea
The most flipside dive to be trippin' in
When a weird sea-wind comes a-whippin' in
Through film set streets of your own road movie.

Sat in a funky caff feelin' groovy
A great matey gaff to be sippin' in
As our boogie biscuits go dippin' in
Forming spectral clag people in the sea

Near the pier booms a synagogogue of beats
Some sentinel presence gaurding the door
As pulsating bass-lines throb through the streets
Wild eyed cid-kids rove child like to the shore

But no! Acid House is a long time gone
So I shall move my tripping farther on

COMPOSED AT AN OLD BUSKING SPOT

In the year of nineteen-ninety-seven
I staged my very own Summer of Love
Valhalla for vagrants...gypsy heaven...
Conjuring words & music on the move

The south of England play'd mother & host,
In sand-dunes, communes, woodland would I sleep,
From town-to-town along sun-kiss'd coast,
Singing to the people to earn my keep.

A year has pass'd, a year! they were great times,
But since I have journey'd both wide & far,
Sweeten'd my tongue in more sensual climes,
Soften'd my song with accomplish'd guitar –

But no! tonight my thread I shall not spin
So these memories remain...

lingerin'

FERN

I took myself to the Sanctuary Cafe
An open-mike night carves the atmosphere
Poets & musicians trade riffs, thoughts & tunes

I chill'd at the back with roll-ups & a beer
Hot goddess takes the stage in a tie-dyed t-shirt
Alien eyes, beads, necklaces & v-shaped guitar

As she sang my soul & my pants started stirring
She finished her songs & took her seat alone
So I joined her with a stack of G&T's

I told her I was into writing poetry
Y'see, there's something about the 'p' word
That makes women immediately think about fucking.

*"I've got another guitar back at my pad,
Do you fancy a naked back-to-back jam?"*

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT

Being virgin to Eros & his sighs
Spectral seconds attend the growing soul
Hearing a lute-string'd, aether-breathing call
I look into her lustful, starry eyes...

...Like songbirds witnessing the world's first dawn
Or proud parents cooing the babe's first yawn
Like virgins witness to the breast exposed
Or an exploring of the always closed...

...Like mountain men & archipelagos
Or young sweethearts sniffing a first red rose
Like money men glimpsing a glint of gold
Or distant kin returning to the fold...

...Like Muslims when they first met Mahomet
My soul this moment never must forget.

THITHER THE ABOVE

O knightly lights of heaven, star on star
You never shone so beauteous, we are
The work, perhaps, of some astral being
Or am I him now I am the all-seeing
Acolyte of the lost art of the skies
Painting Orion & the Geminis
Musing upon those long, eternal days
Soar shooting stars, trailblazing my amaze
Mixt with the phantom llumin'd Milky Way
I saw, I swear, the Seraphim at play
Dancing between the planetary kings
Lord Jupiter & Saturn's eerie rings
Venus is beaming streaming dreams of love
Sweetheart come hither, thither the above

WEDNESDAY
Brighton – Chelsea

THE FADER CODE

- 1 Remain alert
- 2 Always keep your cool
- 3 Trust your instincts
- 4 Never show your money
- 5 Know your stations
- 6 Another five minutes won't hurt in the loo
- 7 Know your enemy
- 8 Know your postcodes
- 9 The train's going there anyway
- 10 When in doubt, clout
- 11 The train always comes when you're skinnin' up
- 12 It is every Fader's duty to baffle & confuse
- 13 Always remember your free cup of tea
- 14 There's no need to rush - unless you're being chased

VICTORIA EXPRESS

I hop on a train
little fuss
few passengers
watch me sit
a black woman
a young punk
old man twiddles his tash
& in a flash
the train sets off
planes wing over gatwick
& as we reach croydon
my brain
pretends to be elsewhere
dreaming of mysterious fancies

NORTH PECKHAM ESTATE

Our fore-fathers conquer'd many a land,
Imperiously ruled the seven seas,
But when an empire crumbl'd into sand
She placed her subjects in badlands like these

Inner city boroughs of airless stacks
Bob Marley booms from a thousand windows,
Heartless, hopeless & eighty percent blacks,
Gangs of ragas lurking in the shadows

Old Ford Escorts lie burnt out & rusted,
I walk down a litter-strewn corridor
Must use the stairs as the lift is busted
Graffiti fills the whole of this fifth floor

After rap-rapping on a letter box
Comes the rat-rattle of numerous locks.

A LANDAN TING

From Queen Speed-Fiend I score ketamine,
Snort some upstairs, an empty 63,
Drop down thro a K-hole...

* * * SPACE * * *

...Dig the din
Of the last squat rave at Cardboard City.

It kick'd off Friday, still going on strong
For Sleep seldom visits the Techno Tribe,
Four days in pills are going for a song,
I drop eleven for that heaven vibe.

Builders labour by these workshy shirkers,
Like zombies with meat-cleavers held in hand
Ravers wave at crazy go-to-workers,
Rushing to cell-blocks all along the Strand

Charged up by the city that never rests,
We are all as one here, all London's guests.

INNER CITY LIFE

In London every person is a passing thought...

In cities every tree is a weeping willow
Drooping sadly in the poisonous air,
Airless stacks are the soul-sapping pillow
Where only money-mongers seem to care.

The M25 means captivity,
I mean, what is there left to delight us,
Lust-for-life crush'd through blind servility
Barely sooth'd by these dance-all-nighters!

Traffic encircles the concrete conurbations,
Mobiles by the millions melt the mind,
Germs breed in the underground stations,
This microcosmic mirror of mankind.

In London every person is a passing thought...

ROYAL OBSERVATORY

Cronos must run til this sun sends no fire
Or fresh, new fertile systems can be found,
O boundless time, by mortals ye be bound,
Theatrical arrogance of Empire.

I stand upon the invisible line,
Gaze down on a dome built by my nation
For the child of future generation -
Will he, like me, question it's wyrd design?

To this spot faithless multitudes will come
Marking their lives with one shared memory -
Faith-festival of Christianity.

Being mere months from the Millennium
These amazing days enthuse me with rhyme
& build my own monument to this time.

THE TOWER

Upon Tower Hill the angry mob calls
To the hooded axeman,
"Off wi' 'is 'ead!"

Traitors believed they'd be better off dead
Than a rottin ghoul in these devlish holes...
Thousands of epitaphs scrawl'd into walls
Tongue worn by black tongues...

In this clammy dread
A doom-dripping gloom from which all hope hath fled,
A phantom's tortured wail rises then falls.

Thumbscrews, iron maiden, stretch'd on the rack
Flailing cat 'o' nine tails raking the back -
Foul instruments of an inquisition.

What cruel devices have we in their place,
In this age, to form an equal grimace?

Try sitting thro' a full Eurovision!

THAMESIDE

Through an empire's heart I walk'd with my muse
Talking on topics such as history
Art, architecture & Humanity
Drinking deep in the riverside views

*The Jubilee flags of an empress queen,
The rumbling growl of American tanks,
The fabl'd stand of Cassevillanus,
Those burning hulks, sad ruins of Medway,*

I stand, inspired, as an English cadence,
Temper'd in Oxford, refin'd in Richmond,
Whispers anthemic songs of history.
Breathing tranquillities & ambience
I grasp the meaning of this poignant bond –
We both are drifting seaward steadily!

POET'S CORNER

Where art thou now, dead poets, the fine dust
Of each soul-wrought line by time is scatter'd
& lies, a thin shroud, oer plaque, tomb & bust,
Til colomns of church & state lie shatter'd.

My fingertips grace the grooves of the names
Of those rare few who sought a nobler truth,
Whose burning thoughts of empyrean flames
Embark'd on an eminent path of youth.

Chaucer, Sidney, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton
Marvell, Dryden, Pope, Blake, Chatterton, Clare,
Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, Byron
Tennysson, Yeats & Hughes,

To thee I swear
As I am deep in love with poetry
Your dedicated brethren I shall be.

POETICUS

Mine art asleep, yet she dreams in beauty,
Paints tangible scenes to adorn the page,
Aluminous thoughts to milk a mild age
Of mellowing souls, sing a song freely,
Triumphant songs draped in resplendency,
Stars shoot lucid cross an opaque stage,
Rare spirit released from a mortal cage,
I have a new song for thee, poetry!

In raptures receiving the sacred states
Of an enlighten'd mind, virtuous heart
& resurgent soul, we follow the fates,
& tis a fine thing to play at an art,
To champion renaissance, join the brave
Who sought the greatest glory of the grave.

ON THE BLAG

I have me a line for a stroll round the town
A poet's night out, those random & aimless
Saunters through cities which always roll good

*"Could you spend a day with no money at all
& still eat well & feel thoroughly entertain'd"*

I found myself at the Queen Elizabeth Hall
Perched by the river in all it's civic splendour
Milling with punters – it must be the interval
I slip in amongst them, flow free to the music
(well would you buy a half-eaten sandwich)
Bert Jansch is playing a sublime solo gig
Five hundred hair-do's & one smiling face
Picking so haunting with a wild-western tuning
Applause so astounding as I do one from the building

WEST END STROLL

Tapestry of light & colour surrounds
This concrete island of Trafalgar Square
Intermingl'd with a million sounds
Merging as one in the cool autumn's air.

In Leicester Square's carnival atmosphere
Buskers, fire-breathers & living statues,
Compete for the ear, the coin & the cheer
Of global tourism by fast-food queues.

I find a jam sesh in a cellar bar,
Dig the free jazz, down a triple Jack D,
Borrow a wannabe star's flash guitar,
Whine an arrangement in the key of E.

Through Soho's sleezy Soho flows the Rose -
I'd rather be me than see shitty shows!

ARTISTRY OF LUST

A girl I gave a line to caught me up
Fancy a smoke... that's what I call karma
She's an artist... Poets & painters
'Boets & Bainters!' said King George the First
We catch taxis to Clapham, she cooks up chi
Post-gig glow, smoking skunk in my kitchen
She's fit as fuck in an unkempt kinda way
We chat about life & poetry & music
Then she sasks me did I wanna do some art
& strips naked, I guess she meant life drawing
Elegant & energetic she was my kinda lady
I start to sketch her tits... thought what the hell
Am I drawin' em for & pleasantly suggested
A congress of the Tiger, the Cat or the Deer...

DOROTHY ROAD

There's no gas, electricity or water in my bohemian paradise
Section Six in the window of a four hundred grand caravan
Five grand or six months for anyone who tries to get me out
Decorated by wicked paintings some artist left in the attic
Furnished by street rummages & the local Oasis shop
I mean, I transported my fuckin' bed in pieces on the busses
Cookery on a calor gas stove - paper plates & plastic cutlery
No brain-rotting TV - just Classic FM on a cheap shower radio
Snap & crackle of an open fire fuell'd by wood from the skips
Exercise a home-made hockey pitch in a room downstairs
Tesco's toilets, job centre phones, Battersea library's internet
Britain's largest sports screen at Clapham's old Grand Cinema
Tuesday's pay-what-you-like theatre at the Latchmere & BAC
& for washing a wicked swimming pool with a slack front desk.

THURSDAY

London Town

FINSBURY PARK

Shriv'ling blackberries
Juiceless husks upon the vine
Leaves shredding daily

On a gusty day
Leaves go often showering
Conkers just miss crowns

Family of swans
Swanlings beak & plumage grey
Parents stiff & proud

Rustling leaf pile
Squirrel leaps from winter stores
Long before the freeze

Though close to concrete London
What sweet, warm slice of Autumn!

CAMDEN MARKET

On returning from foreign places been
With many a fine tale to tell good friends
I check out the crux of our music scene
For a look through yesteryear's retro trends

Down a hustle-bustle store-lin'd road, vibes
Blare, blurring as one – this southern Afflecks
Is the mecca to London's fashion tribes

The chick on the sixties stall oozes sex.

I rummage through scarves, suedes & velvet pants
Ponder on which Ben Sherman shirt to choose

She's serving a geezer...

I seize my chance
Along with a new pair of cool, blue shoes

At my worn-out Elleses funeral
Soles in shoe heaven, rest in the canal.

LONDON

This is a city of a thousand years
In every street the feet of history
Have stepp'd upon a living destiny
That never was more bullied by its peers

from winklepickers to the kingly Leers
That ruddy river roll still sets souls free
Or is this just a penitentiary
No more great place than crocodiles have tears

Yes! Find the civic splendour of a state
& taste the trappings of imperium
But is this place the pinnacle of fate
Some sequined seat in a Roman forum

Perhaps tis best to peaceful peaks aspire
& midst their windy solitude retire.

SCENT OF ADVENTURE

Of Ketamine I took a little line
& steer'd into the depths of Babylon;
Found the channel tunnel link at Leyton
There on a concrete slab I did recline
Took out tomatoes, pannini & wine
Luncheon'd a la Meditteranean
As if I march'd north with Napoleon
To Waterloo, when that cool muse was mine.

What brings us here, moment mysterious
To choke upon a modern, barren scene
Of fences, stone, steel girders, wheels & weeds

Ah yes! I see, passing imperious
The Eurostar goes gliding south serene,
For destinations that inspire great deeds

POCKETS OF NATURE

Gefrye Herb Garden
Medicinal myriads
Summer-scented square
Culinary cloves

Soutwarke Cathedral
Luncheon by the Thames
Scrawny pigeon pecks my crab
Beggar blags my bread

Hyde Park
Eerie noiseless trees
Do cities drown out birdsong
Do birds dwell elsewhere?

Wormwood scrubs
Fresh lungs of London
Pigeons perched on crossbar frame
Leaping labradours

North Acton
Rush-hour souls splash home through rain
These ten-mile limbs refreshing

**On Being Turn'd Down For a Date By An Ex-Girlfriend Who
Preferr'd To Spend The Evening Training For The
Forthcoming London Marathon**

Since Xerxes time, whence from the Attic shore
Fair Hermes & forced marches made their way
Phidippedes, before the throne of war
Fields Marathon, forever, & its bay.

There is a race, a race so nobly run
By those daring to fly upon the wing
Whence from the music of the starters gun
Pain overwhelms, first dull, then searing sting.

These aching roads I share with thee my sweet
Toiling today as with the dashing mass
For thrifty time I deem'd my life complete

But now it seems commingling lives must pass
Being two runners of different pace
Should I, perhaps, have settled at thy grace.

MANUELA

I mingle with a galaxy of stars,
Down double absinthes at the cocktail bars,
Strut a sleek swathe through a heaving dance-floor,
Share what this great feel for rhythm is for.

My god!!

I know her!!

My lime light falls,
On a long-legged, raven-haired beauty
Elitely to me, she squeezes my balls,
The primal sign of promiscuity.

I had to admire her fiery swagger,
This subtle way she asked me to shag her,
Ravishing eyes, nice ass & lavish scent,
Her lips, softened by the Latin accent,
Gently nibblin the lobes of mine ear,
Whisp'rin,

"Signori, I waant you, rrrright here..."

THE RIDE

Manuela drags me out into the street
Outside the club, a long white limo lay
Some pussy-cat engine purring on heat,
A whirr of wheels & we are on our way
Heading towards the first glimpse of the sun,
A sense of early morning in the air,
She unzips my fly, slipping her lips on
This pleasure, I comb fingers through her hair.

Smokin a cig I think of this England,
Country of civilised barbarians
Imprisoned upon one tiny island.

No wonder I like the Italians;
Easy-going temper, cultured gusto,
Musical language & great fellatio.

A SURE THING

Gravel crunches up the hotel driveway,
Dark shaded chauffeur parks the limosine.

"What ya doing in London by the way?"

"Why, bebbly darleeng, I'm now a Porn Queen!"

Night Porter winks as he hands me the key

"Enjoy your stay, sir!"

Of beer his breath stinks.

We enter the suite, she flicks on Verdi,
Lights incense sticks, candles, mixes the drinks,
Straightens cushions upon a king-sized bed.

"Ey get a leettle charlie, y'wan some?"

"Too reyt!"

She flings me a bag o' Bronson,
A gold card & fifty - I snort a line.

"I must change deese clows,"

She sultrily said
As the coke kicked in, this Universe mine...

FOREPLAY

The bright night-lights of the metropolis
Sprawl away for many a built up mile...

...I hear a voice like a swanling's hungry hiss,
I turn, my lucky lady stands in style,
Scantly attired, scarlet negligee -
Her flashing lashes urge my manhood move.

She strips to my thumb-clicks...
"Ecchelente!"

"We clee ze body before we make love!"

After the long tenderotic shower
We lie on a rug by a blazing fire,
My tongue caresses her quim's deep desire.

Glory-groaning O comes after an hour,
She lies on satin sheets, legs wide apart,
Lips sopping,
I'm in,
<Flurp>
a fanny fart.

POET Vs PORN QUEEN

We embark in slow sensuality,
I hold her firm in my rhythmic embrace,
The mystical look of sweet exstasi
Spread musically over her darling face.

Tempo increases, now we are fucking,
Each thrust fulfilling her lust's willing need
Biting & rubbing & squeezing & sucking
Her raking nails making my broad back bleed.

We jockey for position, she's on top
Of this proud sceptre, buttocks aboundin',
A climactic shudder, the wild wails stop
Of a queen impaled on her king within.

I drown in her fragrance, kneading her hips,
She touches her bosom, sucking her lips.

PILLOW TALK

She begs me for more, her eyes burning wild,

"We love again, Si?"

"Not tonight my child,

Great lovers may make love all night with great verve,

But Poets love beauty but once to preserve."

Now that the wildfires of passion are gone

We lie, two lovers, welded into one,

& pledge myself 'Cavalier Servente,'

Whisp'ring the Vita Nuova of Dante

Fingertips stroking lips, nipples & thighs

"Bellissimo..."

She sighs, closes her eyes,

Capturing moments forever to keep

Wandering into dream regions of sleep

Growing a glowing halo,

I propose

'O marry me til morn my Roman rose!'

FRIDAY

London - Barnsley

ARRIVEDERCI

Best to begin a day wrapp'd in the arms

Of some naked angel, her drowsy sleep

Dreams darling skies, sweet children of my charms.

Through draperies morn's airy beamlets peep,

Lighting vestal vision in duvet bliss

I stroke olive skin, soft as springtime snow,

& on her forehead plant a tender kiss

She stirs! she sleeps...

Alas, tis time to go,

Leaving her dreaming of stars & comets,

Shall I be lovely, aye I shall compose

This heartbreak with a soft parting sonnet

Leaving amid the curls on her cushion

My mind's immemorial impression.

AMABANDON

Manuela... as with the sea & the waves & all the oceans
Once more the tides of time have brought you to my side
 From where I now drift sadly
 Floating upon the endless waters of stretching time,
 Pausing to reflect on the light of your face,
Half-a-light now, then brighter than the evening star.

 So let us set adrift for islands of soft exstasi,
 Two fine liners fluttering the ocean blue,
 Until the occasion we next dock in the same port,
 Some shanty of Mauritius or the harbors of New York,
 Bobbing together in unison, a special shared tranquility,
& our essences commingling on many a fine night upstanding!

So, until time & life's pathways converge us once again
Remember kindly always... you are forever in my heart!

RICHMOND

Galleon smooth from the crest of the hill
I browse through galleries & antique stores,
 Before ordering morning cappuccinos
Their steaming, hot frothiness numbs my chill.

Beside placid Thames flow I calmly stride
 Watching waterfowl in lazy day play,
I ease down the scenic riverside way,
Some elegant swan with a barge-like glide.

At Richmond Lock a clock reads early day;
House-boats huddle on the Thamesian tide,

 A little further on I find the park
Gentleman tugs his dog's defensive bark
We turn to see a Stag stood in the trees –
 "Panic not gentle creature," yet he flees.

TRAINING IN THE ART OF FARE EVASION

When jumpin intercities from their source
Faders should never feign they are asleep
Remain alert for the conductors sweep
& when you see them – the toilet of course

Zap yer zits, make a joint, squeeze out a shit
In the the time it takes the enemy to pass
Then in the dead zone find good spots to sit
Pref'rably for footise with some fit lass

I rack up my coat, make myself comfy
Kick off my new shoes, air these well-walk'd feet,
Spread out my notebooks, pens & poetry
Then hit the buffet for something to eat

Dont forget the compliment'ry brews
& papers from First Class,
then sip & read the news.

NOVEMBER NEWS

Hurricane Mitch kills eleven thousand,
Tory peers block Blair's bill of house reform,
Future King Charlie knocks up his fifty
And Saddam weathers the threat of a storm.

Newbury opens, the police guard Swampy,
British beef is blagged back on the menu,
Kate 'nice tits' Winslett marries in secret
And Pinochet waits for his fates review.

Villa claim top-spot, bet they don't keep it?
Hodde's wing-backs beat the Czechs at Wembley,
Stewart must be blest, storms save the first Test
Oh! & how I do bleed for thee, Burnley FC.

But finally...

...don't trust any of it
For the news we read is just biased bullshit.

RIKKI DEE'S TABLE

Dick needs a table
Derbyshire & Dronfield
By Bowshaw & her car boot sale;

Prams * baby clothes * jigsaws * suitcases * mothball suits
Settees * lawnmowers * crap coats * comics * CDs & fish 'n' chips
& finally a three pound table

On a wood to coinage ratio the real deal
Made in Czechoslovakia stamped underneath
Looks a bit like a bench

We set off home, the smash & grab complete
Low Edge, Meadowhead, down into Woodseats
Frequently chillin' out, perched upon our 'bench'

"What's wrong with you people, have you never seen a table before!"

& finally home to a perfect fit!

PILL POPPIN' POET

I get to the Firkin, deep in Broom Hill
Where mi old mate Paris is a-dealin,
He exits the loos...A fiver a pill!
Stock'd up & rockin... the Friday feelin'!

The saviour of the modern-day raver
Lies in the marvellous Mitsubishi -
I chew on a pill, swill down the flavour,
Tastes a bit fishy like years old sushi.

Through the Steel City's seven lamp-strewn Hills,
I stroll, ready to jump trains to Burnley,

Saturday night?
A pocket full o' pills!
Superstylish?
Absofuckinglutely!

A troubadour buzzing through Birley Wood
A bag of wrecky eccies to the good!

EPIPHANIES

Old Town Barnsley, nineteen-ninety six
Pushing back the bound'ries of the corners of my mind
Cultivating the way of the artistic essences
Even kinda dabbled in a little wyrd occult
Read the esoteric life of Aleister Crowley -
Smack-addl'd mystic of Sumerian lore -
& beginning to write - all the energy within me
Focused upon the page... creation... literature
& my breath, O frail spark, was changed forever
An intellectual girlfriend at the time saw my glow
Gave me her edition of the complete WB Yeats
Starry acolyte of the order of the Golden Dawn,
& as eagles rose from my fermenting imagination
 Led by the light of a true Gaelic bardsman
 I found I was a poet after all

HM PRISON WAKEFIELD

There is a strain of personality
Surrender'd in the birth realm of the soul
When grown men cry "*Release the beast in me!*"
& stranglers do their work behind a wall.

What is this strain, this stigma of the brood?
So many men may never understand
How phantasies, so sickening & crude
Become motives, a guiding higher hand.

From what source does this restless spirit spring?
When perversion rejoices in killing
From the whore-rippers of Leeds & London
To the Son of Sam & Dennis Nielson –

Crimes unknown but a century ago
What traumas to the world these deeds bestow?

BURNLEY

You must know Burnley to see it's beauty,
Twixt Hambledon & Pendle where she lies,
Thou fertile region of the North contree,
Of Bingo halls & market stalls & pies,
Of cobblestones & Bovis Homes & lanes,
Of working men & the working men's pride
Of balmy days & snowy greys & rains
& blatantly the world's best football side.

You must know Burnley to see it's beauty,
The arches & the chimneys & Turf Moor,
The stately halls of Gawthorpe & Towneley,
The station & the bus-stop & mi door -
You can keep yer New Yorks, Delhis & Rome
At the end of the day there's no place like home!

HOME

I breeze in, kiss mi mam, butter some bread
"A phone call, letter, we thought you were dead!"

*"Mam, chasin' destiny, I do great feats
But you treat me like Abbey treat Keats!"*

*"Yer no son of mine get a proper job
Yer nowt but a no-good, bone idle slob!"*

The same old twitterin' in mi ear lobe
I shit, shower, shave, raid mi dad's wardrobe

In the smoky club where men dodge their wives
Best bitter's well cheap & smokosphere thrives

*"Oi thats mi shirt!" "Owdo dad? "Owdo son!
"How was Italy?" "Sunny!" "Here's a ton!"*

Back at the ranch dad snores through drunken slumbers
As mi mam rips up her same old lottery numbers

NOW THAT I AM TWENTY TWO

As I wander the back-streets of Burnley
 Subconscious in familiarity
I took solace in these stark surroundings
Still hearing my heartbeat & its poundings
 This is my land of birth, O rosy town,
Where over cobblestones the Brun flows brown
 All seasons have I seen here & each June
Observe the endings of a thirteenth moon
From these hills many rides of mine have sprung
For footed light go men when they are young
As Pendle from the deep mists reappears
 I put to bed the ghosts of yester years
 Let cycles olympic psyches renew
God willing, now that I am twenty-two

FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS

Often I, an addicted Eastender,
Love to observe mankind's menagerie,
 Especially the 'Work-for-Weekender'
 Found in Town Zoo or City Safari.

At watering holes or in dog-eared flats
Snakes, Dinos, Vultures, Rats, Cows, Moles & Sheep,
 Packs of Fox-Hounds & scatty Pussycats,
Are crammed at Sardine bars, seven ranks deep.

Two-by-two the babbling rabble migrate
 Through Gorilla doors, get tanked up on hooch,
 Drink rats-piss like Fish, ass-wiggle like Bait,
 Their rasion d'etre the ten-to-two smooch.

Then they sing, kiss, spit, piss, shit, fight & feed,
 Before hurry to his or hers to breed.

FRIDAY NIGHT IN

They sofa-sink into the tee-vee zone,
Check out the beach-babes of Australia,
Find our fave Antipodean would own
Chloe's face, Sally's tits, Sarah's figure.

A pipe mix for the Simpson's double bill,
Buckets for the cheap thrills of Robot Wars,
Quick nifty fifty flick thru Digital,
Switch off the Top of the Plastic Plop stars.

Reefers, Pizzas, two-for-a-fiver wine,
Waterfalls, Temple-balls, fine hot knife high,
A tournament of Fifa Ninety-Nine;
Spliffs, Young Ones, spliffs, Friends, spliffs and T.F.I.

They slap on the Roses, smokin' the score,
Buzzin' all night on an N-64.

SATURDAY Burnley - Liverpool

SLUM CLEARANCE

As a poignant time-lapse of the soul,
Removes my child-hood street-by-street
I brood upon an artificial meadow
Where recently dilapidated terraces
Were brick-by-brick demolish'd, levell'd low,

Once, with life, these districts resounded
But all are dying now, like falling flies,
Grandmas, Grandads, old Aunties, bald Uncles
Now, a generation of old photographs
Then they laughed & cried like me & you

My own street seems to have survived the cull
But for how long? if others of its ilk
Were deemed ungodly, then surely snobbish time
Will banish mine beneath a grassy mound.

GAWTHORPE HIGH

Now where are you the class of '92
More time pass'd by since that day
Than we ever spent together
Now life is beginning to gather speed
& I expect we have all changed, a little
Different, yet essentially the same
People, who sped home from school
To watch Neighbours in its heyday,
Wondering what a working day entail'd
& love & kids & all that mad adult stuff

Now shine, sun, shine, on the class of '99
Riding bareback upon unbridl'd youth
Just seven years of schooling separates us -
The strange gulf of nature that parts
These faculties of the University of Life.

THE SWOLLEN RIVER

The river flowing by is often wide & high
Upon a timeless voyage to the sea,
Beside the scene I'm caught, connecting to the thought
Of nature & her rimless mystery,
Growing after the rains, flowing 'long swelling lanes,
Upon her banks a special place to be,
Beyond the smoky town that turns the water brown,
I listen to the special sound she makes,
As lower fall the skies we watch the river rise,
Up to the trees to seize the branches breaks,
At ever faster pace her swirling foam curls race
Along the course that she forever takes
For rivers flowing by are often wide & high
On voyages out to a timeless sea...

OVER LANCASHIRE

Mounting the sheerest slope of Demdike's Hill
Come gaze upon the county palatine
A view so boundless & a sky so blue

Fair Ribble snakes thro Preston like a vine
Accrington, there a flash of Morcambe sand,
The Yorkshire quota of the grand Pennine

The pleasant fold of Barley close at hand
The rugged range which buries Manchester
The little snow swept fells of Westmorland

Pendle City's terraces thrown together
Twixt church & chimney, cluster'd Simonstone
To Trawden's waters - clutching wylde heather

I head for the neat houses of Hapton
To claim a fresh vista from Hambledon...

SIR NICKY STOWELL

*Lord of all Barlick, Lancs, MBE, MBO, BO,
Bachelor of the Farts, Super Chick-in
Puck-aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!*

Nick, 'diddliddling,' my bestest friend,
Do you remember our eighteenth summer,
When it felt the good times would never end
& Barry Island the only bummer.

That Ynnysddu flat, "Weed," birds & wimmin,*
"Blowin' a reefer on Salisbury plain,"
Newquay, seven chicks, soap, sun, surf, swimmin'
Our first Glasto - you gotta go again...

Saw Bjork's debut, Newport's Supersonics,
Peer Gynt play Stratford, Burnley rule Wembley
Massive crowd in Brixton for the Manics
& that mad, May night in Monmouth, where we
Sat with the Roses and their album new,

"Don't think it's as good as the first," said you.

* they're good fer nuthin, but maybe one thing –
to service the needs of my ding-a-ling

THE LOST POEM

(part 1)

I wrote a poem today, a few miles from Skipton,
My friend had driven us to this funky metal scrapyard
Volkswagon carcasses, camper vans & Beetle hulks
& a couple of greasy mechanics chilling with the sun
It was of those places you never thought existed
Like the place where all the lost odd socks went

As my friend looked at a ninety-nicker bumper,
I was suddenly inspired to write a few desolate lines
About the decaying Earth & the dwindling fuel reserves
& finished it off with an arty kind of twist
About discovering an old photograph of myself
Holding a pretty young lady, she was wearing beads
Sat upon the beach of, perhaps, San Remo
It never happened like that, but all poems need an end...

(to be continued)

THE BIG MATCH

Robbed o life & lifestyle the yeomen came
T'worship King Cotton amidst the hills,
Built terraces & the cathedral mills
Then demanded sport, the beautiful game.

On a famous site from the Bob Lord Stand
My brethrn sing their 'arts out fer the boys,

“COOOOME OOOON YOOOU CLAREEEETS,”

Tis an awesome noise
That shakes the cup o Bovril from mi hand.

A Penalty! Up pops Andy Peyton,
The Padiham predator spots the ball
A silent prayer, a few strides, the shot – GOAL!
The crowd erupts in divine elation.

Burnley F.C. are the best at football
& that's the bee-hole & end of it all.

HOT-POT PIT-STOP

Up Manchester Road, b' Shanks's Pony,
Inter Scotts Park, then on up t' Summit
T' pay mi Grandparents a swift visit
Fer a bowl o' the best broth in Burnley.

Grampa potters about 'is garden shed,
Granma slaps th'icin on' slice from market,

Cake crumbs fall on mi old Batman carpet,
Big piles o' comics & games under' bed.

Wow! Space Marine, Gnasher Badge, Hairy Hand,
Toy Soldiers, Test Match & mi old Spectrum -

"What fun," said gramps, "We 'ad back in those days..."

"Yer tea's ready!"

"Mmmm...them dumplins look grand."

"Do you like 'em son?"

"Aye Gran, I love 'em."

& polish seven platefuls in 'er praise.

GRANDAD'S ARMY

In France, nineteen forty, fought the East Lancs,
Bully beef'd, armed t'teeth gainst the mighty
Marauding hordes of Messerschmitz & tanks –
Grampa's caught as last boat left fer Blighty.

Force marched long corpse-lined roads fer sun-parched miles,
Fritz kicks water buckets, shoots random fire,
Til in the bleak Black Forest begin trials –
The endurance o life behind the wire.

Half starved , worked to death, yet still Gramps stood strong,
Escapin' 'is duty, sport & order,
By day sleeps in fields, by night stalks along,
But each time caught just short o' Swiss border...

After five years the Russkis set Gramps free
To find a wife & start 'is family.

BINGO LINGO

"...Eyes down fer yer full house!" the camp caller croons,

*"Kelly's Eye, on its own, the number one,
& its thee & me, two & three, twenty three,
Heinz varieties, five & seven, fifty-seven..."*

Mary glances nervously at Eileen Pointer's sheet

*"& its Sherwood Forest, all the threes, thirty three,
You've been & gone at eight & one, eighty one!"*

Tension, frustration, tutting & twitching,

*"A fumph & a duck, five & two, fifty two,
& its those legs, eleven!"*

The room fills with wolf-whistles

*"Now who didn't flush the toilet, it's a dirty loo, thirty two,
Ooo! It's the top of the shop, blind ninety..."*

"EEE-YAAAAA!" screams Mary Pie, spilling her drink.

"Buggar," puffs Eileen, *"I only needed seventeen."*

THE DRIVE

Nick's bleepin horns blare,

"Show time, time t'go,"

In the front seat, skinnin up, sits *Mojo*,
In jumps up mi oldest buddy, *D.J. Funk* –
Pills, powder, cigs, cans, king-size, gum & skunk.

As the levellin' joint passes around
We sample the Charlies new album's sound-
How mellow is the music & how high?

Stars cluster the sky, headlights streakin by,
Windows wound down down the *M 65*,
Feelin' Fresh Prince Funky & alive.

As we motor through *Skankymancwankland*,
Home to many a cocky, northern band,
Over gloomy Salford's rain-soaked ridge crest
Manchester looms man I'm not impressed.

COOL AS FUCK OFF MAN U

We park at the Arndale,

"Owdo lasses!"

'Free Ian Brown,' daubed all over Manchester,
Shmoasis blare from the young fool busker.

Floozies ooze by,

'Hey cuties, nice asses!'

Down the Oz Bar we bomb paste base Billy
To sharpen the edge of these smacky E's.

Mojo buys a Big Mac Meal at Mac 'D's,
Spins round the Big-Wheel of Piccadilly
& chucks up in the bogs of the Dry Bar.

Live drum & bass brings us up off our face,
The Superfly Riders funk up the place -
The Lancashire lad more a superstar.

The room goes bright, a boom of mellow dub
It's time to take the boys out to a club.

THE 'POOL

"Reyt, where next?"

"West Bams on at the Orbit..."

"...Nah man, too late..."

"...The Hac'..."

"...Nah, the beers shit..."

"...Sankeys..." "..." Nah man, it's closed down..."

"...Wigan Pier..."

...Nah, everyone in Wigan is a queer..."

"...Lets hit Blackpool, find a shit B & B,

& pick up fit chicks from some Hen Party..."

"...Nah, bin there, worn the crap hat, c'mon team,

Let's unleash these libidos down at Cream!"

Razzin' the freeway, babblin 'bout the Dam,
With Techno Bangin <Bam-Bam-Bam-Bam-Blam>

"Mint mix, Funkster," "Yeah, Angels ninety-six!"

"...Ee-yar Damo" "..." Ta Mojo, Oos next" ...Nicks!"

We park, *"Oi! Yoo lot!"* Six pissed pricks to fight
Nick goes ninja style...Scousers? Soft as shite!

CLUBINNIT

Tis High-Midnight, Dirtytheivinscouseland,
We swagger four abreast, Wild North-West band,
Slip to the front of the coach-loaded queue...

...*"We're extras in Brookside mate!"*
We slink through.

Bass boom, big beats, laser lights, nural surge
A wigglin cutie...Satyrian urge
Sails me through a sea of juicy bootie.

*"If I said you had a sexy body
Would you hold it against me?"*
She turns round...

Fate plays a Soul Mate, his ship runs aground...

Romance awoken, as his life-long trance
Is broken by beautiful circumstance.

No words spoken, we head for a corner
Soon steamin hotter than Swedish sauna.

SUNDAY Liverpool to Carlisle

EXSTASI SPECS

Nick finds bricks were supporting his car,
Dj fucks off with a Hollyoakes star,
Mojo meets his mum back in Manchester,
& I jump on a coach to Lancaster
Cruising this most deserted M6
Oakenfold spinning the Essential Mix
Turns out this bird is a Classics student
& says she's got me a little present
But I'd have to unwrap it at her pad...

Well, man what you gonna do, I aint mad!

Mellow mist blankets Lancaster campus,
Mi drugs wearin' off, the bird aint gorgeous
Good ol' Mitsubishi fat ass syndrome!

"Sorry love – ehm, I've gotta get off home!"

FASHIONABLE PLACES TO DIE

As the old, bald bus driver makes his way
Through wife, two brats, crap car suburbia,
The promise of Lakeland panorama
Tantalises from across Morecambe Bay.

Watching my train rolling through Westmorland.
A rabbit squats on a smooth grassy dome
Zippin out the nip up at Oxenholme,
Chattin to backpackers down to Kirkland.

A parish church chimes forth a ring o' bells
As I climb up to a ruined castle
To gaze on a kingdom of craggy fells
& the auld grey stone homesteads of Kendal.

Munchin mintcake I muse down Stricklandgate
Musing on Charlie & a rebel's fate.

THE LANCASTER SONNET

The secrets of the sonnets mystery,
Are latent in language Italian
Dante, Lentino & Cavalcanti
Gods of an art,
Some sunken Galleon
Rewards brave seekers with priceless treasures
The modern sonneteer's many pleasures

Upon the sonnets' secret mastery
Let us chain each thought & inspiration
& leave them to their Immortality
Through heart-wrought art!

Experimentation
Still feels 'verteux,' new stanzas to design
For example - this invention of mine.

ENTERING THE LAKES

I take the busy tourist traffic road
Out of town, the noise pollutin my thought,
So through friendly farmer fields I ramble
To Burneside station, I pay on the train
To Windemere, each dwellin a hotel,
Then thumb a lift long the lakeside road to
Ambleside, ringed by rugged, russet fells.

Breathin lighter air I climb Winsfell Pike,
Eat my lunch & feast on the scenery;
Sun dazzled lake snakes South bound for the sea,
Ripplin lowlands roll away to the East,
Snow-skipped peaks speak with the winds of the West
& to the North, where I shall roam, a vale
More fabled than Arcady in the spring.

CUMBERLAND

Where two chains of fells meet an inverted
Gateway of such grandiose empirity
Is formed, as from some Tolkienesque tayle.

Through immensual archway I skirted
Thirlmere's piny side, idyllicity
Pours from the mountainsides, flows through the vale.

I come by some cascading waterfall
Kneel next to cool, calm Naiad cadence
Cup hands, dip the icy waters & sup.

I follow the stream, leap over a wall
To bask in Aeschylean ambience
As I, with tremulous ardour, look up

To see spectacular mammoth of stone
Tis Helvellyn - I shall climb him, alone.

HELVELELYN

Up stony slopes I huff, puff & scramble,
All a fluster in the blustery gale,
Eyes blinded by thick sheets of sleet & hail,
Clothes torn by the claws of thorny bramble,
My spirit, 'gainst which angry Zephyrus
Summons all his strength, calls upon the soul
Of our being, for being conquers all.

As I reach the epic peak, glorious
Realm of diety, barren heap of ice,
A blizzard-swept, Valhallan paradise,
I see, in the snows, a fresh silver rose
& wonder how such sweet tenderment grows,
Like the gorgeous gardens of Shangri-La,
In this frozen wilderness, like a star.

LAKELAND SUNSET

Visions of heaven roll out to the west,
The orb of morning clutching to her chest
Our Starbird swoops thro burning copper sky
Neath lilac bands behued as harvest rye,
Lands perfectly, & with mystical crow
Perches her talons high upon Skiddaw,
Completing ephemeral embassy,
Nestling for the night, snuggl'd in airy
Clouds of rosy dusk, moonbeam-dappled hulks,
Wearily drifting as the Dark Knight skulks
Round his coal-charred kingdom, shapeless & starr'd,
Where each bright twinklet is a crystal shard
Studding evening's armour, which when worn brings
The stunning universal thing-of-things.

PURIFICATION

Posions enter me
Through my hands, through my eyes
Through my feet, through my lies

Breathe deep the mountain air....

Purify my heart
Purify my body
Purify my mind

Toxins enter me
Through my hopes, through my fears,
Through my words, through my tears

Breathe deep the mountain air...

Purify my blood
Purify my bones
Purify my soul

LEAVING THE LAKES

'Tis eventide as an amethyst gloom
Lulls the mountain steeps to their stony sleep.

I descend through the dwindling light of dusk
Into Keswick, down its main street, where girls
Gather outside Ye Olde Friar's Sweet Shop,
Drinking beer, singing Boyzone, wanting sex
With the Budweiser Boys in their peugeots.

I'm the only passenger on a bus
That nips & zips through Threlkeld, then into
A total blackness, but for the cat's eyes.

I survey some street lamp constellation
Beyond the M6, tis Penrith, where I
By these crumbling walls of draughty castle

Listen for the <*shrooo*> of the Glasgow train

LUGOVALLIUM

Penrith to Carlisle was an easy score
The total is now six-nil for the tour

Past the King's Head to Jackson's coffee bar
Watch an old yank play shit hot steel guitar

Beside the Eden's soft & twinkling flow
Carlisle Castle looms – big block of lego

I could be an invading Highlander
Or wild-eyed axe-wielding Border Reiver

Psychadelic subways lead to the bridge
Road, stile, path, steps, church, Stanwyx village square

I could be a roman centurian
Guarding the great wall of Hadrain

My Sensei's house looks dry out of the rain
Just a stones throw from being stoned again.

UNCLE MALCOLM

My mentor leads me to the sacred room
Most heaven scented of England's attics
Of quadrophonics & hydraonics
& twenty female skunk plants all abloom,
The needle hits the groove of the LP
Into the air Roy Harper's music leaks
More marijuana mind-massage soothes me
Over ornate chessboard my Sensei speaks,

*"Life is like a game of chess after beers
Push pawns, trust instincts & castlings fer queers!"*

I gambit the knight's pawn, he takes the bait
Bishop check,

King moves back,

Queen sac!

Check mate

Then the contrees' best homegrown dost bite me
Stoned...

Quite stoned...

Too stoned...

Very stoned...

Whitey!

REFLECTIONS

I sit in a chair in synch to the sound
Of the crackling coals flame-flickering free
Grey purring persian curl'd up on my knee
Paws clutching roses plucked from higher ground

Coming out of the Nineties I have found
 Integrity and genuinity,
 Labouring, not for the love of money,
 But for rewards far nobler & profound.

Treading the treacherous minefields of youth
 To be a growing lad is not easy,
One drop in the big sea Obscurity,
 Alone in my quest for poetic truth.

Sonnetizing the zeitgeist of this land
 While counting syllables upon my hand.

LIFE IN THE NINETIES

A puppet monarch, a one party state
 Absorbed by the American Empire,
Poetry, art, sport & music - once great
National Assets - lurk in the sinking mire.

But the nineties were times of pure pleasure
For those who lived on these Isles of the West,
 Of its better memories I treasure
 This little list shall ever claim my best...

... Year fer pop music was Nineteen Ninety,
 Goal was Gazza v Scotland, ninety-six,
Oz bird Annalise, food mi gran's meat pie,

Band – the Verve, nightclub the Orbit, Morley,
 Schindlers List the classiest of the flicks,
Marketing Spice Girls & murder - Princess Di.

EPILOGUE

Provençal buglers spill through morning sky
With tones of man & all his myriads,
Stood tip-toe on a nobler watch am I,
The period of these epylliads,
Planted within the soil of sonnetry,
Lore-nurtured, glazed in gloried eaglesong,
Has rais'd her stakes, chord-scented poetry
Must play the river card for right or wrong.

Not for prosaic titles do we write,
Nor flitting fame shall guide our appetite,
But poets always bow toward their souls,
& now as topics turn to epic scrolls
I must invoke the muses in each rose
As in my mind an Ode to Empire grows.