

JUDY'S JOURNEY TO LIGHT

By

JUDITH ANNE LIGHT

Selected works of poetry & prose

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Beware of prejudice.

‘Light is good in whatsoever lamp it is burning; a rose is beautiful in whatever garden it may bloom.’

-Baha’u’llah

Judith’s Baha’i prayer for guidance:

‘Oh God, guide me, protect me, make of me a shining lamp and a brilliant star, thou are the mighty and the powerful.’

- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá



*Abdu’l-Bahá
Son of
Baha’u’llah
And exemplar
of the Baha’i
faith*

The first principle of Bahá’u’lláh is independent investigation of truth, that is, all the nations of the world have to investigate after truth independently and turn their eyes from the moribund blind imitations of the past ages entirely. Truth is one when it is independently investigated, it does not accept division. Therefore the independent investigation of truth will lead to the oneness of the world of humanity.

- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

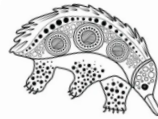
For more information on the Baha’i Faith visit

www.Baha’iteachings.org



Judith Light, the author of these works and the publisher, Raised Ink Press, acknowledge the production, performance and presentation of this material has been mostly on Bundjalung – Widjabal Country. Indeed often inspired by the Elders and youth, many of whom sadly no longer walk the land with us. We pray for their reward and progress in the Abha Kingdom.

We warn Aboriginal friends that names and images of these most missed friends and colleagues appear on these pages.



Judith dedicates this book to her beloved five daughters, five grandchildren, and two great grandchildren.

“I pray they will understand my ‘busyness’ was always in the hope of creating a better world for them and theirs.” -Judith Light

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OPENINGS

(1998)

Poetry is a door.
If you dare open it,
out will pour all the thoughts
you've pushed aside,
all the feelings you kept inside.
It comes from a special place,
an inner, intuitive space.

If you don't like my rhyme,
disapprove of my metered time.
Think my language small,
my metaphors appal.
Well. Tough.
My poetry is for me,
and that makes it right enough.

I will say though,
that if I have spoken words that flow
and carry a message you seem to hear,
that will force from me a tear
and, if I could make you laugh?
That makes my words a real craft!
Though conceived for me at the start,
it is wondrous when your words
touch another's heart!

CONTACT

I wonder at the masters of the word,
poets, literary giants –all the greatness I have
heard in peace or in defiance,
they spread wisdom and inspiration.
Their pain; their joy; their pictures for another's
veneration.

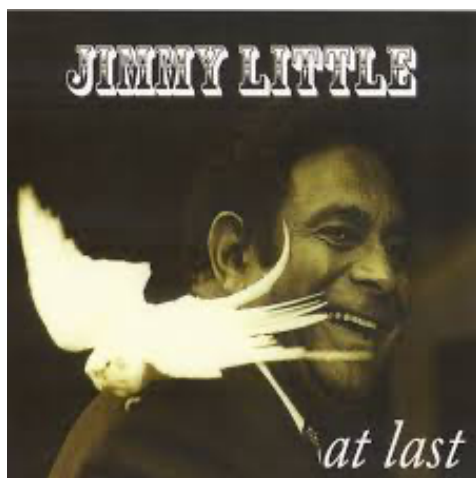
I sigh at the craft in their lines and deplore the
ineptness of mine.
Should I try to surmount my somewhat absurd?
To what end?
By whom to be heard?
Should I express again...
the oft expressed,
or swallow back down the oft repressed?

I lick my lips in anticipation of succulent
syllables seeking passage in terms
writhing like sperm.
To say the 'not before said' or discharge what is
newly birthed from my head?
Words.

Greater than weapons of steel?
Are they really do you feel?
When will the voice of need ever defeat the cold
thrust of greed?
Can words overturn the evil deed?

Alphabetical conglomerates from the past,
amongst such giants cannot last.
But still, I yearn to touch a heart, across the
years.
Provoke a thought; evoke a smile; wring out
some tears.

Like poor E.T. I'm 'phoning home'
across the big blue telephone.
Anyone there?
Am I clear?
Can you hear?
Do you care?



Dear departed
Jimmy Little, calls
to 'Glory' on the
'royal telephone.'
See poem 'Hello,
can I hear you' -
page 120

WHO AM I

(2011)

The label stamped upon my brow
at my very bloody birth,
by a ravaged disgusted mother,
in revenge of the death throes
that expelled me from her girth.

Pointing 'like a rotten tomato'
at red hair, squashed face and worse,
came 'It's ONLY a girl!'
The labour ward's chilling curse.
This so few years after ultimate joy
in the birth of a God given first,
and the acclamation 'It's a Boy!'
had proudly burst.

Oh how that ONLY label stuck!
It took me years to see,
that it wasn't actually part of my name,
but a witch-like prophecy of what lay
ahead of me.
ONLY a girl to my parents,
and to my brother, at best-
'Tag-along' and a downright pest.

ONLY going to marry someday
(No need for education.)
ONLY homely looking.

Anyone could see,
'Plain Jane and no nonsense'
Mum labelled me.
But a good, clean, quiet ONLY!
Someday, someone would see,
as a useful honest hard-working wife,
to 'ONLY' raise a family.

I scored at school. A quite brilliant pass.
Wow.
I thought 'a journalist I'll be.'
The Courier Mail editor smirked,
ever so scornfully.
'We never employ females,' he said,
shaking authority's manly head.

Well Nursing was one thing I could do.
Be a noble servant a Florence Nightingale too.
And so it came to be, ONLY a nurse and
servant to the medical fraternity.

Marriage finally endowed some legitimacy.
A Mrs. Name quite uplifted me,
but as ONLY a wife.
And then ONLY a mother,
naturally
as my Mum had predicted
fulfilment of life would be.
I wonder did she visualise
I would birth ONLY girls in my batch of five.

Daughters learn quickly as they grow that
mother is an ONLY.

And 'What the hell would she know?'

Well guess what. I know a hell of a lot.
Passed life's toughest tests with courage and
honesty, caring, loving and trying, to set my own
girls free
of the suppressive labels and limits that had
disfigured me.

And despite all the rest. I've lived a hard life to
my very best and I do know.

That's the ONLY way to go!



Judith's brother Christopher Robin (born 1931) and a
baby Judith (born 1934).

A COW OF A LIFE

I am a farm girl.
Milker of the moaning, dunging, cow at dawn.
Such small hands when I was six
reaching, stretching, pulling, squeezing
to steal the warm flow the mother gave sadly to
such an alien off-spring.
The calves not allowed to suck it.
Milk sang into the cold metal bucket.
Except, that is, when my brother,
bored with such labour
shot a sneaky, milky missile,
at his even more boring sister.
Or we aimed alternately
at each other's open mouths.
(To this day I can only drink milk that is too
cold to have that sickly smell.)

It was all smells.
Kerosene lantern fighting the night.
Kowtowing to the morning breeze
steaming urine flows, and the hot splat, splats of
the downwards escaping pats.
(These were the 'organic' days –
the 'by hand' days.)
Splattering on our gum boots, and higher,
when you are but three feet from the ground!
There was the pugging sucking mud of the yards
and the smells of the rising sun. (Oh yes it does.)
And the rain

when it married with the wounded grasses
and the grasses turning to cud
under the ruminant march of teeth.
Back and forth, up and down.
Swallow and regurgitate
with a gulp and a cough.

The liquid udder soap, and medicament tars.
Smells and sounds.
Inseparable and saturating the memories.
Clanging buckets. Running taps. Flicking tails.
Escaping their ropes and wrapping round small
faces in pay-back.

Scrape of the three-legged wooden stools.
Click and thump of the exit doors.
As one by one, the raided mothers were freed to
a pasture of succulent feed.
The grass of the hillside, or the oats of the two
mile or, in a good season, the lucerne patch.
Cloven hooves so sure on the hillside,
awkward and slipping on wet concrete,
like oversized secretaries in stiletto heels,
rushing clumsy in and out
of the captivity of the bails.
Poddies and pigs near-by, announced
urgency for their share.
That's when I really learnt to hate warm milk.
Surrogate suckling with small fingers, to the
rasping grasping tongues

of the separated babies, being fattened for the
kill. Bringing miniature cloven hooves down on
small toes and bunting the milk into the air.

Men have told me, so often,
father, brother, and husband,
that the cow does not grieve for her young.
I hear the nightly bellowing still.

My most precious task was the billy of tea.
Whilst the cows were brought into the yards I
stoked the wood fire, boiled the water, measured
the fragrant leaves...

why don't they smell like that now?

The steaming repast in one hand, torch in the
other, climb the hill, noting the morning star,
and pink, and gold horizon,
and the bird song.

Why don't they sound like that now?

Later we would return to the house for toast and
porridge. You guessed it...

Why doesn't it taste like that now?

Dunking faces hands and feet in the wash tub in
front of the glowing firebox.

Then the milk cans and we children were
dispatched, down to the gate on a wooden sled
pulled by our faithful, uncomplaining draft
horse, Baldy.

We would wait for the carrier in the days first
full light.

Warm sun reviving full life, in our bodies,
which had never known artificial sources of
warmth.

How we loved the travel in the back of the truck,
sitting on the fruits of our labour as if to hatch
them, silently dreading return to indoors chill of
that small wooden schoolhouse on the hill.

There I mostly remember the smell
of the exhaust of the teacher's motor bike
arriving whilst we, the coming 'learning',
ignored and delayed by the French cricket we
played with stick and dried cow-pat.
Amongst the parked ponies in the yard.
But...

It was in that school room.
That's when life became hard.



Quiz: -Can you identify the slates? Our only form of writing
material in our schools of the day & the blackboard, the teacher's
main technology??

A DAY AT BROKEN HEAD

(Reflecting on reflections 1996)

Shisssh.

Shasssh.

Shisssh.

Shasssh.

Sighing song of the sea,
stroking sand with washing wave.

Surging.

Sliding.

Free.

Eyes drowsily scan the very highest blue
and elicit clear response,
'There is nothing you have to do.
Rejoice the day.
Nature is lazily at play. So be it also, for you.'

Pubescent moon awaits the night
promising new times to come to light.
Coppery sea bird with gleaming white head.
A sacred Brahmana, circles the sky
as dogs and people on sand stroll by.

But... we defy the echoed blue. The 'not to do'.
We walk to the cliffs. Looking for what?
For some 'thing' new.
We gather up rocks in which we find trapped,
mineral history, times solidified map.
Our need is to seek, explore and be knowing

and achieve collection of things, once growing
to bring the universe down to size
to carry home some 'conquerors' prize.

Hunters and gatherers never rest.
are never at peace. Always on quest.
We sense, but ignore, all the while
Creator's amused, parental smile.

I wisssh...

we wisssh...

shoosh...

shoossh...

shoossh...



AGENDA BENDER

(Mozambique Flood February 2000

Where black and white, waring enemies and a deadly feline huntress
clung together on one branch waiting for the dreaded army
helicopter)

Don't tell me I must, even should!
I'm free and that's so good.
It's MY life and I'll do what I like!
But what IS my day's delight?
Mozambique, in one dreadful flow,
brutally forced me to know.

I like not drowning.
Indeed, I like dry,
and without having to climb precariously high.

I like walking on firm predictable bases
sitting and lying-in comfortable places.

I like close neighbours that are not competition
neither threatening danger, nor a diseased
condition.

I like loving hands in soft touch,
not grabbing in desperate strangling clutch.

I like eating, not robbing a wide-eyed waif.
I like sleeping, feeling cosy and safe.

I want all that for my loved ones too,
and I want to see the fantasy through

that I looked after them.
Made them wise and strong.
Taught them to be happy,
live well and long.

Mozambique. What have you done?
Challenged my assumed priorities.
My belief I had some authority
had some modicum of control
was even a somewhat competent soul...

All around me, my choices clatter.
Did they ever really seem to matter?
All life un-seemly remains,
soap scum on the bath,
on the carpet. Stains!

Grandchild's food and drink now lost
and little feet have left a muddy cost.
Cobwebs and dust daring to bury
souvenirs, photos, trophies of pride,
that brag a smug 'all mine'
to those who remain outside.

As if they look!
As if they care!
About 'I did that, and I went there.'
Imprints left by their touch just say
'Come over here and wipe me away.'

All need dusting, polishing, painting,
and hum a never-ending berating.

‘Clean me’ or face the dreaded ‘they,’
and whatever it is ‘they’ might say...
Lost the war with spiders and bugs,
that dare to increase as they live with us
with papers full of boring filing needs
and with all the books I was ‘gonna’ read
and the endless dreams at night
of the wonderful stuff I’d plan to write.
Sharing the depths of my wisdom? No?
Or feed ego's snivelling appetite?
Perhaps just dusting my brain?
Shaking it out and pretending it’s sane?

What is my agenda to-day?
That's all I'm trying to say.
Make a difference? How indeed?
Where and how are my skills in need?
And what would I like to do?
When, why, how and for whom?

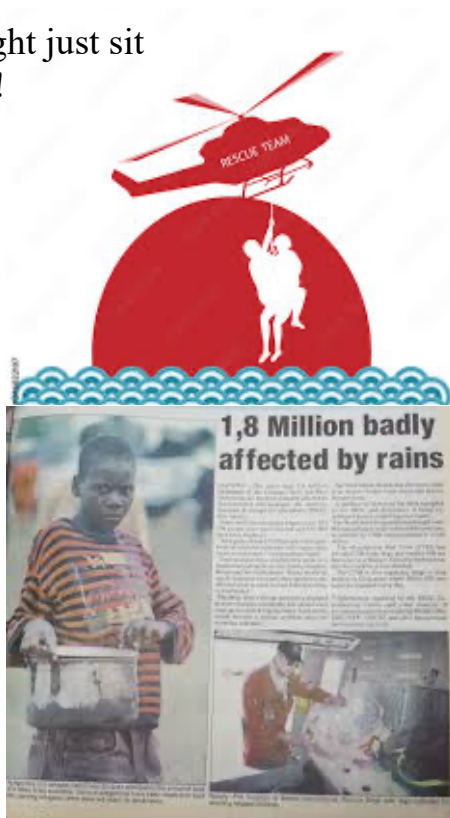
In Mozambique, in just one day,
an almighty flood, of raging mud
swept thousands of lives away!

No help feather duster on a branch a-sway
in desperation's unity, of predator and prey.
Clinging together sans religion, race, or station
old enemies airlifting without discrimination.

They did what they must
for those aloft in shivering trust.
White soldiers put life-saving embrace
around 'brothers' so very black of face.

Housework like dusting, not an issue, I'd say
and not in my old, cluttered house, this day!
I think, my fortune I'll measure by the safety and
comfort I treasure,

and I might just sit
and pray!



ALCATRAZ

(Written on 'Un-Thanksgiving Day' celebrated at dawn on the Island of Alcatraz and commemorating Indian persecution and deaths in custody - 1988. 'Wasichu' is an Indian name for white man which translates as 'Taker of the fat.')

Great Spirit come, as we chant to the drum,
through the path to the East, to this spiritual
feast.

Here where the prisoners sighed out their lives,
lost to canyons and plains, and the touch of their
wives.

We stand in prayer, dark skinned and fair,
and I seek in those eyes, so soft brown and wise,
the answer to how you can stand with me now,
a sister of white, and grant me the right
to mourn and remember, your betrayed tribal
members?

I feel of your family. I long for your grace.
I see untold beauty in your earth-knowing race.
Oh please can you guide us, out of our mess,
Before we destroy, all that we have possessed?

Do you think we can ever place white feet on the
ground with respect for the Mother.
Her smell and her sound?

Judith visits Navajo
country with Baha'i
Indian boys 1988



Lead on, I will stumble, after gentle flute note.
After pipe's spirit breath, that the grey elders
smoke. But my heart aches with questions.

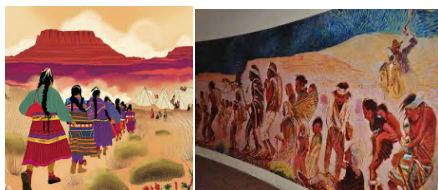
I just do not know,
if the men of the 'white eyes' can ever so grow.
If they can ever come in from the cold?
From the need to be owners, and the clatter of
gold.

They are lost to me also...
As white woman I know all too well that our
menfolk have no rest -no place to go
no time to rejoice. To just be in life's flow...
Driven on to be males, they just chew on their
tails.

But some stood in space, and looked down on
earth,
and saw what a woman learns at a birth.
That we cannot cut off from the life of another.
We connect in endless cycles,
and from the moon's view, we're all brothers.

'No man is an Island,' that's what they said.
In the dawn, when we cried out with the
Alcatraz dead...

Navajo long walk
still haunts Americas
1st people...



ARE WE HAVING FUN YET?

(On observations at the Laundromat.
School holidays 1985)

School holidays...

By-golley days!

When the patter of tiny feet
creates generational gap heat.

and shrill voices winge and cry,
'Gimme this.' 'I want that.' and 'Why....?'
and 'Why ME?'

Mothers sigh...

Where is he, that spawned this seed?

And what was that urgent passionate need?

We now have to dress and tend and feed?

'Shut up – just leave me alone!'
and 'you just wait till I get you home',
or rather... 'Till we see your Father!'

Creation's miracle, life's pinnacle.

Brought into harsh perspective
and questions reflective.

By school holidays...

Sing their praise, that time of joy,
for every little girl and boy.

And when every Mother whispers low
'Just a few more weeks, or days to go!'



Judith wrote the above during her
years of running
The Station Laundromat.
Where she met her husband
David Alexander



BAGGAGE- THINGS THAT GO BUMP...

(2008- Dating again after divorce from 25 years of marriage)

Dinner went quite well...

I can feed anyone...

Then...

we launch into...

the weather....

approaching storms...

enthusiastic observations of temperature...

variations...

Moving onto tentative query; of interest in last night's news story...

A comment on the latest scientific theory.

He looks blank.

Revving up now... on some political views.

some indignation about things 'over there'

'Terrible... Too awful... What's it coming to?'

Right now, to be honest, I am not sure I care,
and he didn't even know that was happening
anywhere.

The subdued romantic lighting has attracted,
not cupid, but shadow monsters...

Dinosaurs and neanderthal

are loose in the room...

lurking behind pot plants.

stomping and silently roaring and screeching.

My lounge has become a primitive jungle.

If we stay very quiet, very polite, ignore them.

They just might go away...

or will they materialize?
Have they in fact done so?
In us?
Try stifling them with charm,
that should keep us from harm.
What harm?
What's to fear?
What's the danger in his sitting so near?
Oh my God, I think I'm going to laugh.
Did he see me smirking?
Did he just fart?
Or did I?
Phew.
Non-touch hands sit stupidly in laps.
Hands can be incredibly dumb at times.
Down cast eyes snatch a quick
look round the room.
Are those 'things' becoming visible.
Is there something there?
Is there help coming?
Yes... a cough... a watch...
'Actually, I have to go... just remembered my
mother is going to call.' (His mother? Call from
where... is this a seance?)
'Had a rather late-night last night too.... Uhm.'
(Is that sweat on his brow?)

'Sorry to dash.... Be in touch.'
(In touch? Not this lifetime, I think!)
He's gone.
The prehistoric critters slide out after him.

I am left alone with a thunderous emptiness...
A huge sigh of relief ...
and a sort of snivelling giggle...

A full moon of extraordinary beauty looks down.
So...what are you leering at?
Some friend you are!
Don't just sit there...
Take your sickly half-light to some swooning,
song swept, lovers somewhere.
Tonight, is not the night...
We failed to cast a spell and frankly,
you can go to hell.
I am off to bed with the T.V.
There's one of those old romantic movies on.



BEING 'STILL' IN THE SEVENTIES- DON'T GIVE UP!

(Be nice to have companionship, company, when you are old...)

Nice to have... just anyone,
to talk to... a hand to hold...
Someone to care for... and just be there for...
Loneliness is so sad... When my Mum died...
my Dad was lost... and he so often sighed...

Forgive them, for they just don't know.
Passion, intimacy, love.
Even SEX!
Are still alive in aged souls.
Needs, to the full, do not end...
With muscles that ache, and wrinkled skin, with
joints that creak, that can barely bend.

Hark to a shocking old woman's sin.
(This'll cause the young to gag and give the
brunt to many a joke; caricature for the clever
young wag.)

My hormones still respond and rise,
and body juices flow and secrete
for as long as my lungs can still inflate
and my heart continues its rhythmical beat.
Animated skeleton I am not...
I still need... and want. The lot!

There is still laughter in my throat,

music and dance in my feet.
Lyrics of love still arouse and move
and alone... I am incomplete.
Longings and appetites gnaw away,
at sunset's glory and days end
for much more than just a kindly friend.

Perhaps we wisest elders know.
An even deeper need, than thoughtless frenetic
youth, when out planting the family seed. In the
memory of what once has been, missing and
emptiness are twice as keen. 'Snow on the roof
and fire in the hearth,' when I was young, an
amusing say. Now I know the reality, in my
latter days.

But I tell you, it is not at all half bad
to have found wildest love
and most exciting sex.
Not from some pimply amateur lad,
but with a seventies man at his very best!



BENNY WITH WINGS

(To a special Somebody
Now a Nobody
from Everybody here,
who held you dear...
After presiding at Bennie's funeral
April 1998)

So Bennie how was the flight?
With those iridescent wings,
the dragonfly emerging
as the universe sings.
Was it beautiful, and free
the turning of night, into light.
The melting of pain.
The becoming at last totally sane.
to be driven no longer, by questions and answers
nor ravaged by beastly decays and cancers.

The struggle of mother is over too.
the agony of 'What on earth to do?'
The worry, fear, and responsibility
of getting it right for your progeny.
And the guilty pain.
and wishing to do it all again.
Without generation gaps, and sibling strain.

No longer needing to explain things away
or stall them till a safer day,
outsmarted by slick morality
of this poisoned day, and it's 'God' T.V.
Never again 'What would you know mum?'

Will eradicate what you've said and done.
No-one can say that now.
you DO KNOW the Big Why, and the How.

It's over, the war between 'Mother' and 'self.'
The feeling of being alone, on that shelf and the
gnawing hell of longing to be loved, as well.
I pray sometimes you knew
how many of us, did love you.

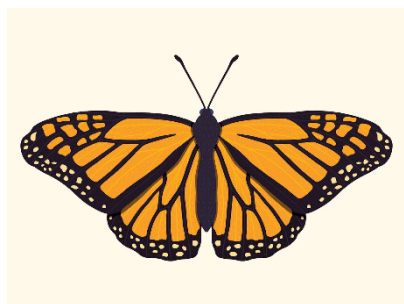
I know you can't wait for me.
or come back to this earthly clay,
to tell us what you, at last, can see.
I feel you lifting away
and release and rejoice in
your spirit at play.

For us it is painful no longer to see
the teasing green eyes that first captured me
when twenty years ago we met
on your Brunswick Heads back doorstep.
me with fresh chicken to sell
you, as always, going out on your searching and
moving your person about.
Though the contact was short
the moment brief.
There was a locking in
'we've met before, we will meet often, there will
be more.'

And that is still the way
it is to-day.
Someday I too will have my wings
will catch up to you
will break through.
and will you still have those green eyes
will you still be chasing that 'somebody'
that you so desperately wanted to be.

I gave you a certificate once. You'll recall.
To try to help you to stand tall.
Now you know the answers and could give me.
The ultimate nod.
The eternal degree.

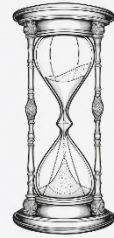
Thanks for being 'someone' to me!
How silly now, recriminations...
About not being perfect at anything.
It was ALL quite perfect, for growing wings.
We love you very much.
But goodbye.
We can hear you laughing
in the sky.



"WHEN WILL IT EVER BLEEP BLEEP END?"



They tell me the Latin term
'Tempus Fugit' is not known by
to-day's world... so let
yesterday's woman tell you it
means 'Time Flies.'



* Tempus fugit!

Indeed how the sand does flow!

Away, days away, it does go.

But to where?

And should we,

in our ticking time frame care...?

As our time slides away, to create another's first
day, we lay down our words, our thinking,
like seeds of bold daydreams.

And birth them through our fingers, into that
shimmering stream.

Where is the position, in such a transition.

Where roots can cling, and products grow?

Not in corrosion of perpetual motion which we have
no power to slow.

Even miracles carved on tablets of stone shift back
to sand and fall through the hand. All that we ached
to know, and share will pass, with a spurt, when they
invert the glass.

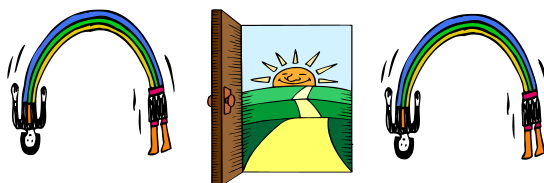
Where is sense, in this disappearing tense?

Where the gleaning of ultimate meaning?

Looking up and back we can see there is pure beauty
in this sand falling free, the colour; the feeling, the
mystery and the magic glow that is love lubricates
the fall of memories all.

And the music of laughter echoes ever after

and the warmth of the friction of many is one
all part of a miraculous tide of caring and sharing,
and the thrill of the ride.
That which has passed...
I cannot re-call, but for the happening.
I thank you all.
It was a great event, and I am content.
But wait.... there is more!
Quantum physics has landed
In the world of inner space, in a sub-atomic place...
other worlds,
other forms, other days exist,
they say... this world of 'many mansions' suggests
new places to play....
Mirror worlds of greater dimension can be found.
To ride spiral worms through a black hole, I could
be bound!
That I will get there before you, is a reasonable bet,
but life is one big question, and the only answer as
of yet...
for brilliant scientist, great sage, and idiot alike.
Is 'Maybe so... you will never know.'
(Till you too arrive.)



Footnote: If you've not seen "What the bleep bleep do we know"
You'll not understand... Do yourself a favour and find it online.

BLUE MOON

(May 2009)

Cupid's flight
across the night
rides moonlight.

Moon's echo trails
cross water blue,
turning it a golden hue
and cupid slides
across it too.

Hitting this spot
depends a lot on
whether two see
gold moon blue,
or blue sea gold,
bids hearts to unfold.
Letting little arrow through.



BROAD SHOULDERS- A WOMANS BEST FEATURE

(February 2001- A movie called 'Four Old BROADs' stars Debbie Reynolds, Joan Collins, Shirley McLain, Liz Taylor. A movie written by Carey Fisher (Debbie's daughter). Interestingly it was a Television movie.

The Theatre Moghuls said it was 'unsaleable to theatre audiences.'
The comment being- 'The world is not ready for Older Women... Yet!')

Tell us something we don't know.
The female is a sex aid, a toy, an ornament,
when young.
A nurse or domestic tool, in middle age.
In old age... what?
An empty vessel.
Non-recyclable at that!?
Well guess what.
The world has a missing link.
A lost chord.
A loss I suspect we will learn; we can ill afford.
I give you.
'The old broad.'

Just as with this planet.
(Old woman indeed)
That gave birth to us all.
Just so mothers are being ravaged by greed.
Adolescents chewing up in haste.
The very roots from which they grow.
The womb is not a simple box
from which a soul just, outward drops.

An inextinguishable, spiritual cord
connects life's journey at its start...
and is always, always, always...
In touch with the mother's heart.

Beginnings are not a useless page,
though faint and faded by turn of age,
to toss aside, like a shell.
It's your history. read it close and well.
It could include a map of the way,
and wisdom to light your darkest day.

See survivor elder sisters, in Australia's big red
heart.
Picking up scattered pieces of their people torn
apart.
Night patrols gathering children, sniffing petrol
cans,
reaching out in rescue,
with weary twisted hands, and talking ancient
mysteries, with coloured dots in sand.

See Uluru roll out of the mist, in the dawn-time
all mothers know,
waking alone to pray, for footprints aimlessly
wandering
where crazy young heads make them go.

The Rock is mother of countless sands, our roots
and a living sanity, and God's love, in a pair of
hands,
are the Old Women of humanity.
Give them more than a backward glance (they
await your call)
give them,
YOUR very last chance.

(They gave you their all...)



Baha'i Quote:

We must declare that her capacity is equal, even greater than man's. This will inspire her with hope and ambition, and her susceptibilities for advancement will continually increase. She must not be told and taught that she is weaker and inferior in capacity and qualification. If a pupil is told that his intelligence is less than his fellow pupils, it is a very great drawback and handicap to his progress. He must be encouraged to advance by the statement, "You are most capable, and if you endeavour, you will attain the highest degree.

- 'Abdu'l-Baha

WHEN TO PULL MY FINGER OUT?

(Dammed if I do. Damned if I don't.)

Life is so dangerous.
There's just too much of it!
Only one way to survive.
Pretend you have no credentials.
For all the great potentials
Who me?
I am too busy...
with basic needs and greed!
Besides there'll be no failures
if I side-step gallant deeds.

I check the flood gates,
that hold back the threat.
The overwhelming life flow,
that may uplift or drown me yet.

The books on my shelves.
all the 'gonna' reads there
Reproducing themselves. I swear.
Words and knowledge,
past and present...
To be read; insights and questions swirling in
my head; poems and stories trapped in my brain.

My historical deeds; past pleasure and pain.
Straining to give birth.
Create.

Yearning to be something great.
Dare not allow breach of domestication.
The ought's taught as civilization
Clean, shop, nurture, feed.
The others,
(Rationalisation of every mother)
'Do something useful.' My Mum always said,
'And keep doing it till you are dead!'

Horried clock hands cover my face.
Too late they say to launch into space!
The 'whole of life' tsunami drains away to sea.
Not ready, or brave enough, for all that
challenged me.



CARNAL MOON

(1980)

I took a lover last night.
First, he crept into my bed,
sliding silently across the covers.
Kissed my eyes gently open,
drawing me out, through the door to pass.
Then we met again, upon the grass,
where he penetrated my very soul
and made me whole.

There was incredible pain
In the ecstasy of that intercourse.
The pain of pure beauty and radiant joy
and of belonging and becoming one...
of being united, with the entire universe
in an orgasm of absolute solitude.

Such aliveness.
Quite akin to death's mystery.
Enlightened with knowledge
that cannot be learnt or taught.
Such humanness that transcends being man.
Intimacy.
With the full moon
and carnal knowledge of the stars.

And then...

Exhaustion beyond weariness,
as I am left to nurture the Divine seed
that entered my womb.

My woman-ness
(Never again to be 'just' woman)
for now, I carry the secret of Creation.

We are of the cosmos made.
Star chips off our lunar parents.
Pulsing with the Divine.
The minerals of the soil
The very stuff of our bodies.
and the hairs of our head,
and the light in our eyes,
sound in our ears,
as with the leaves of the trees and the waves of
the sea.

We could do all things now.
Even fly.
Could we only remember how.
Perhaps our children will wing it again,
above earth's material pain.
It is deliciously cold out there on the grass.
In nature's pure nudity.

But...

We return to a warm bed.

For the ultimate consummation.

Sleep.

Benediction so sweet.

Came the birth of dawn.

Red sun emerging.

My lover has left me.

Alone with and bearing the laboured sweat of
day.



CATCH 22

I nearly died when the man said to me,
'I am leaving... I must be free.'
What crap was this?
I was the one, caught in a trap.
I was the one, sat upon,
with most to gain
with the rider- gone.
It happened.
He went.
It was pain, and hooray.
I suffered, and rose...
To a much better day.
The young one he found, to make him glad.
As she left him, called him quite 'mad.'
This time 'twas she who ran away.
Leaving him alone and grey.

Still no closer, far as I can see...
To being free...

CATCHING THE WIND BENEATH OUR WINGS

(Baha'i Woman's Retreat April 1997)

Two wings on one bird.
A good, and a bad wing?
A right and a wrong thing?
How absurd!
Perhaps a strong and a weak, so to speak?
No Creator plans a creature
with such a disabling feature.
Belief in a better side
the other, a deformity to hide
are poor aeronautics for life's ride.
Nature's wing, has no need to be best
or use a weaker, to make flight a test.
Wind and Sky know every feather is blessed.

Look to the laying of the egg
and parental hatching
for such mismatching.
Seek sad lack in the nest
and first lessons in flight
for hampered full development,
and distorted God-given right.
To harness air's flow.
Weakness must stretch to full power
and sometimes, for an instant
the stronger must slow,
resist its upward thrust,



wait for the other in full trust.

That balance in the whole
brings full power to the soul.

No matter how loving,
no matter how strong,
no one can sing the others song.
Nor can it alone, master the air.
Ego can never deny
the wind's demand
is for two in the sky.

Don't tell us it's all done.
When India still slaughters
babes not labelled 'son'
When Africa still mutilates female parts
and Western films show us, as victims or tarts.
When pre-pubescent is where 'It' is at,
and women in politics are labelled 'fat'.
Humanity will plummet in dreadful headlong
fall
until it sees and accepts, the Sacredness in all.
Till we finally understand the original 'To Be'
blessed all partners in upwardness
with complete equality!

Baha'i Quote:

'The world of humanity has two wings—one is women and the other men. Not until both wings are equally developed can the bird fly. Should one wing remain weak, flight is impossible.'

— Abdu'l-Baha'

CELEBRATING GREATNESS

(1998)

To stand tall.
But not by standing on any other.
To strive for excellence
without applause as the goal.
No need with commercial glitter to shine.

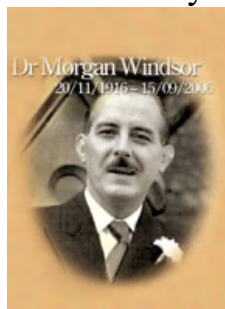
To radiate comfortable, honest, greatness.
Is to reflect the Divine.
I have seen it in my years.
Sixty plus,
on my way through this planet's haze and dust.
In this life of painful learning
and desperate hungry yearning,
just four or five times in all my years
and when I did, it brought me straight to tears.

In Nelson Mandela.
Well, what can I say?
Everyone worldwide sees him that way.
I was there in South Africa when was elected
and that, of course, left my whole life affected.
On all media, his face, and his messages,
daily uplifted, touched and inspired,
even those whose politics had expired.

Doctor Morgan Windsor,
the surgeon who saved my father's life.
The best in heart lung surgery,



but his greatest moment to me.
When taken out to dinner by our humble family
to celebrate ten years
of Dad's one lung capacity.



My mother, having worked
in the theatre's lowest level
sterilising tools for years,
now in her senile, nervous fears
drops a slimy oyster
which down her cleavage disappears.
That doctor put gentle tissue bearing arm around
her back and retrieved
the offending oyster with amazing skill and tact.
Saying 'You look so very well Ruth,
and thanks for the dinner, very much.'
How she glowed at his attention
and the affection in his touch.
There was no more radiant face
on any elegant woman, dining in that place.

I saw it last night, in a woman
in T.V.'s life story of Judy Dench.
Actress superb, woman extraordinaire.
A life of great skill and wisdom.
A giant standing there.



Exposing with courage and humour,
her mistakes, and great achievements,
with equal pride and flair.
My love asked, 'Why are you crying?'

Why was I?

Because before I die- I long to be such a one...

Then she sang a finale.

Did it so well.

With quite gravelly voice cast a powerful spell

‘There ought to be clowns. Bring in the clowns... Don't worry they're here...’

And the joke of my life came awfully clear.

With things and achievements,
my busy-ness score.

I covered body and life
to make them seem like more.

Coping – A clerics mantel.

Hides the true form.

Keeps the real me undercover
safely and warm.

Oh, for the courage to step out as me
and not be afraid of what you might see.
And the irony is, that's true humility....



CELEBRATING WHOLINESS

(Reflecting full moon full universe 1999)

Softly sighing breezes.
Warmth of strident sun.
Incandescent silver moon.
When hot day is done.
Water's rippling laughter.
Visible chime of stars.
As if strumming swift light fingers,
twanged a million-night guitars.

Magic of an intimacy
with other people's parts.
In a bonded whole of connected souls,
and love generating hearts.
Looking to great mountains.
Dolphins leaping from the sea.
All these things of beauty.
Cause reflection on Infinity,
and conviction of Divinity.
Best accessed by music's tongue.
Such sublimity, denying words,
must ultimately, be sung.

Melodic praise in retrospect.
Alone spells Hallelujah effect,
sets minds to throbbing introspection,
hearts a stretch in blissed erection,
giving birth to unbidden prayer
to the Unknowable 'Out There.'

It is irrational at best, to me.
When so many clues abound,
that there is a Great Creator
turning this universe around.

To, with dogma claim,
little 'Man-ness' as His name!
Limited role of Father/Son
could never encompass such a One.
Rude argument makes insane Babel
About His 'proper', man-made, label.
And even more bizarre,
such protagonists dare to own
an 'Almighty God', as theirs alone!



Baha'i Quotes:

To every discerning and illumined heart, it is evident that God, the unknowable Essence, the divine Being, is immensely exalted beyond every human attribute...Far be it from His glory that human tongue should adequately recount His praise, or that human heart comprehends His fathomless mystery.

— **Baha'u'llah**

Regard man as a mine rich in gems of inestimable value. Education can, alone, cause it to reveal its treasures, and enable mankind to benefit therefrom.

— **Bahá'u'lláh,**

CHEMO

(An American Indian Elder I met in 1988, who at age 50 + his guess since he has no history of birth date) was learning to read and write, so as to be able to prove his Indian heritage and legitimize his family name. He runs a sweat lodge and teaches tribal traditions, in a sacred place behind his shack.)

‘I don't know.’

‘God, I don't have the answers.’

To give those young bucks.

Those shadows of the braves.

Denied the sun dances.

They go hunting for kicks.

Using chemical tricks, they seek mechanical thrills. Instead of galloping on the plains. To chase the buffalo kills.

His eyes throb with the pain,

That only the Elder knows.

When the wisdom that he offers,
is scorned by those
full of the greed,

Now it's hopelessness that grows.

Elder sighs as the youth turns his back.

Deaf to the warnings ‘He knows that track.’

Respect for the Elder is not a game
feeding man's ego. Not honouring their fame.
It's a doorway to listening.

A bridge across the ages.
When we open our hearts to grandmothers and
Elder sages.

Press closer to be near him.
Come. Sit at his feet.
Join hands in his circle.
Make it complete.
This much wounded warrior has done it all.
Politics to poetry. He has answered the call, to
battle for justice; to lead 'gainst the foe; and kept
right on fighting,
when spirits were low.

Gently now, in humble tone,
claiming reluctantly the
Elder's throne.
He talks about 'the spiritual way';
'The Red Road Journey'; the promised day.
Of loving unity, of joy and peace,
of red and white, in dance and feast.
He has created a garden of ritual praise.
For celebration and healing.
and remembering all the old ways.

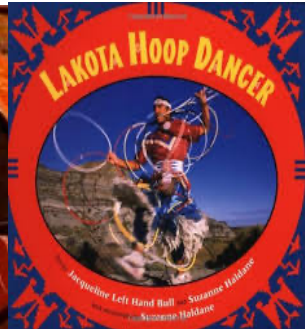
Chemo. Chemo. Giant man!
Scarred and weary, yet still with a plan,
and talking forgiveness to your enemy's clan.
You put your hand so kindly on mine,
patting smilingly

‘All will be fine.’
and I know in my heart ‘fine’ will not be for
you.

As you battle the odds,
to see your dream through.
‘Fine’ for you, never has it been.
With the losses you've suffered,
and the cruelty seen.
Your buffalo head bows, not in submission.
It's your courageous surrender
to a much grander vision.

I honour your distance...
I hear your heart.
From the path behind
where your life made its start,
to horizon's glow and the path ahead.
Where you now must go.
With the courage and wisdom
you say,

‘I don't know.’



CHILDHOOD REVISITED

(Like all sequels, not as good as the original. May 2010)

There was that wonderful moment when
I was around about nine or ten.
Oh, how brilliant I was, for of course
I knew EVERYTHING then!

I remember my mother; which I do now; quiet
often. As my wrinkles drag me down, sidling up
to my coffin.
I have these moments of alarm.
Where has all my knowingness gone?
It's not so much my memory I am losing,
but life's certainties, certainly take a bruising!

I remember the story they used to tell.
Hope I remember the theme and the plot.
It was 'When I was young Dad was ignorant.
Now I am older, he's learnt quite a lot.'

The reverse seems to be happening to me,
as grandchildren grow up and each day
the knowledge and wisdom of Einstein
they seem aptly prepared to display,
making me feel a bit stupid, you could say.
'Is this that thing?' childhood number two.

Perhaps I already have it...
has it happened yet to you?
The facts and answers I once knew well
seem faded and useless, as far as I can tell.

Well back to Mother and my youthful insight...
So, well I recall what Mum said THAT night!

‘There are somethings you don’t know yet...’
Was her parental, ‘been there done that’ bit.
With a hint of affectionate tolerant smile,
flashing a secret smirk to my Dad- All the while.

Well.... Reeling at such a shocking suggestion,
I carefully processed it straight faced,
as I stood stock still in thunderstruck space.
I began thoroughly searching my head,
for the slightest hint of evidence,
for the nonsense she’d just said...

Not a single concept or insight
came to sight in there.
But determined to be fair,
I searched deeper and longer
for ‘stuff’ that just was not there!
Then in relief, I smiled.
A bit condescendingly, you could say.
Forgiving her stupidity, I turned confidently
away.

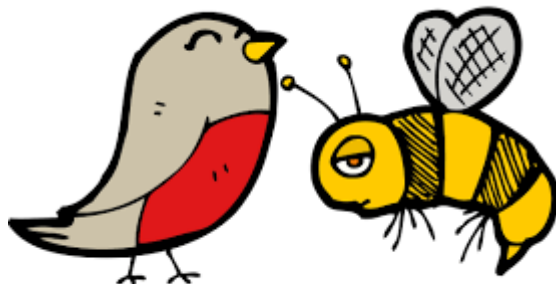
Many years passed by, until an even more shocking day.

When the awesome age of twenty-one, it finally came my way.

Well...

My deflated conceit crashed me to my knees,
for at last, I learned about...

those filthy little birds and bees!



TIS THE SEASON TO BE CRAZY

Shop. Shop. Shop!
Cards are running hot, hot, hot!
Jingling coins, inserting pins.
Either way- the cashier grins.
'He's on his way.' The adverts scream.
Ready now or not!
Kringle's ancient charity, as modern Santa,
'sleighs' the lot.
Takes us on real 'dear' ride.
Have we been snowed, or what?
Smart shoppers could have said, 'there's danger
in the red.'
In elfin bouncing beanie, and on that phony
silken head.
But we must fill those stockings on the little
darlings' beds.

Boxing Day's not far away.
In fact, it's dead ahead.
Wraps and cards discarded, lights and glitter
dead!
Cash in the unwanted gift or exchange it for
something instead.

Doesn't seem to matter what the first box was
for.
Taking the day's bounty leftovers to the sick
and to the poor.

But it's 'really for the kids,' you say.
So they know how much you care,
and incidentally impressing every
peer group, everywhere.

And lo, the only pine trees you'll ever get to see
groan and glitter of enslavement to
China's new economy.

But hold the cheer!
In Beijing kids can't even breath.
Christ-mess is not snowflakes softly kissing
leaves.
But chemicals, ash and gasses flutter up into the
air.
Children can't run in their treeless streets.
With face's masked with cotton-masks,
Still, they do not dare.

Christ upended money-makers in synagogues,
they say.
What might he overturn on the alters of our day?
Perhaps the jingle-bells at checkouts,
Reindeers, snow and sleigh;
and chocolate bunnies, in the wings, waiting for
the next Holy day.



What might he say to Santa's bankers and of
their plastic cards we play,
and to us worshipping and adoring God,
the Capitalist Christmas way.

‘Peace on Earth. Goodwill to Men.’
Angels carolled, on the first day.
That's a gift won't come along,
on any cardboard sleigh.
Nor selling off the planet, for baubles, beads,
and booze.
Our one and only family home,
we've mortgaged and could lose!

Commerce gave us junk food.
Now obesity plagues the world.
But ‘junk joy’ may make us sicker.
It could cost us the earth.
All for a few shiny lights and glitter.
That's more than they are worth!

Baha’i Quote:

Consider to what a remarkable extent the spirituality of people has
been overcome by materialism so that spiritual susceptibility seems
to have vanished, divine civilization become decadent, and guidance
and knowledge of God no longer remain. All are submerged in the
sea of materialism.

– Abdu’l-Baha

CLOSE CALL

(On the highway 1977)

A close call- near accident -
a reminder, as such,
that life - the awesome miracle,
does not hang by much!
It's a gossamer thread,
not our choice or making...
unpredictable in breaking.
Swift silent fate can slam shut the day.
It's a perverse game she loves to play.

Rejoice every moment,
thank-fully each day
for, you never can
enough have been...
or loved... or known...
or done... or seen...
when
"it" is wrenched away.

Baha'i Quotes:

Know thou, of a truth, that if the soul of man hath walked in the ways of God, it will, assuredly, return and be gathered to the glory of the Beloved.

-Baha'u'llah

O my God! O Thou forgiver of sins, bestower of gifts, dispeller of afflictions! Verily, I beseech Thee to forgive the sins of such as have abandoned the physical garment and have ascended to the spiritual world O my Lord! Purify them from trespasses, dispel their sorrows, and change their darkness into light. Cause them to enter the garden of happiness, cleanse them with the most pure water, and grant them to behold Thy splendors on the loftiest mount.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá

S.A.V.E.D BY CO-COUNSELLING

(Anti-dotes to insanity.
Support; Attention; Validation; Expression;
Discharge- 1988)

Help me
Break free
Must see
Real me
Distress drags
Powerlessness sags
Voice tone
Means fear 'alone';
Thinking clogged.
Action bogged.



Dear friend
Ear lend
Hand touch
(Don't clutch)
Praise me
Raise me
Clear my doubt
Point out
Opening flower
Of my power!

Baha'i Quote:

The Great Being saith: The heaven of divine wisdom is illumined with the two luminaries of consultation and compassion. Take ye counsel together in all matters, inasmuch as consultation is the lamp of guidance which leadeth the way and is the bestower of understanding.
– Baha'u'llah

COLLEN ON THE ROCKS (JUST THE TWO OF US)

(Gibraltar Creek Autumn 1996)

Sunlight dapples through a swaying pair
of sentinel and weeping gums.
Etching with tumbles of dark curling hair,
echoes of Irish origins, of skin, far too fair.

Playful strands escape control
of hands now clasping dainty feet,
as a young girl is a still life moment,
at one with nature.
Serene and discreet.

Falling leaves share with winged friends,
a ride to the flowing stream,
or chose to land on a mossy mound
where leprechauns just might be seen.

Birdsong, and chuckling water.
Fluttered applause of the trees.
A tiny frog singing out for a mate,
most assuredly must all create.
A place of total ease.

On a flat black rock, knees to chest,
a sprite was, for the moment mine
and we shared a daydream blessed.
Froze a snapshot, in place and time.

She seemed at peace and trusting life,
but eyes closed and head hung low
did her soul rejoice, or was it in strife?
How was I supposed to know?

Could she ever share with me,
her questions, fears and hopes,
of what her future was likely to be?

Ask me to show her 'the ropes'
What advice might set her free?
Tell her prince charming was coming
'someday'
To rescue her.
To take her away.

Not mention a monster with a sick appetite.
Who would devour her body, then toss her aside.
A magnificent person.
Unused inside!

But the greatest fear for her, in me?
Had she already found a black dichotomy.
Between a young girl's 'foolish dreams'
and what she was told, she ought to be!

I suspect she is all to unaware,
of the miracle we were allowed to share.
Life in the now is a precious find.
Enough to wrest grateful prayer from me and
mine.

Bemoaning or romancing the past,
and yearning for instant fortune and fame.
Are a cruel mix of dishonesty, and a cynical
gambling game.
Perhaps someday she will recognise that really
finding a rainbow's pot of gold, is in times when
we share the best that life can be.
And that her leprechaun of old...
Well, that was me!



Baha'i Quote:

Consider the flowers of a garden. Though differing in kind, colour, form, and shape, yet, inasmuch as they are refreshed by the waters of one spring, revived by the breath of one wind, invigorated by the rays of one sun, this diversity increaseth their charm, and addeth unto their beauty.

How unpleasing to the eye if all the flowers and plants, the leaves and blossoms, the fruits, the branches and the trees of that garden were all of the same shape and colour! Diversity of hues, form and shape, enricheth and adorneth the garden, and heighteneth the effect thereof.

In like manner, when divers shades of thought, temperament and character, are brought together under the power and influence of one central agency, the beauty and glory of human perfection will be revealed and made manifest.

Naught but the celestial potency of the Word of God, which ruleth and transcendeth the realities of all things, is capable of harmonizing the divergent thoughts, sentiments, ideas, and convictions of the children of men.

– Baha'u'llah



COP-OUT

(1996-1997)

(On listening to the radio phone-in after the exposure of that frightful video of police hamming it up on 'Deaths in custody.'

Fancy-dress with a noose around their neck.)



'What of the prejudice of black towards white?'

'That is racism too. Right?'

'Isn't it time they let go of those tears?'

'The anger - that belongs in past years?'

'Well... Like the horse that bucks a man from his back.'

There is a difference for the blacks.

I don't think I ever heard women
use such scathing words.

For women know the kind of hate
generated by domination of a so-called 'mate.'

And that a bully has all the fun.
Not the receptor of cruelty done.
What is hardest to understand,
is the hate of the ruler
for those under his hand?

Slowly, through seeing what was done to me
labelling, crippling, subtly.
Taking my words, my voice, away.
Making me lesser, in every way.
I learnt the workings of labels and names,
of ridicule and one-upmanship games.

I saw the way the thing was played.

How a man of white, on top- Has stayed!
And the shrinking that happens deep inside,
the black
that's TAKEN for a ride.

Baha'i Quote:

Racism retards the unfoldment of the boundless potentialities of its victims, corrupts its perpetrators, and blights human progress. Recognition of the oneness of mankind, implemented by appropriate legal measures, must be universally upheld if this problem is to be overcome.

-The Universal House of Justice



CROWNING HOARY

(1990)

‘Silver threads amongst the gold.’
That's been said before!
Schmaltzy lyrics to the old.
‘Little ladies’ of folk lore.
Diminutive ladies, quietly passing by.
Cottage gardens, under azure sky.
Or in gingham aprons, with apple pie.
In rocking chair, lavender, and lace.
Silver crown over smiling face.
On canvas, in myths,
and in stories said,
so be it... But not on my head.
Always so glowingly, notoriously, stentoriously,
and vaingloriously, (and not like some)
laboriously. RED!



‘Tick tock’ sounds life's clock.
On my brow, history starts to show.
Are years proving sweet endowment?
Oh no!
It's a ‘knock, knock.’
What's there?
And look in the mirror, if you dare;
a call to reflect on...
Reminder of past failures,
and proven imperfections.

Year's messages say, 'I am my hair.'
'What am I if it is not there?'
Like ghostly biological tears,
grey threads whisper death fears.

I can hear the villas calling.
I can feel the neurons falling.
This is a winter thing.
It is cold.
This getting old...

Where do they get off calling it sweet?
Aching back. Shuffling feet?
Away, little, old, and grey.
How can they say, 'Wear it with pride.'
In a world where the young are so advertised,
and discoloration on my head
says little bits of me are dead!

But Lo.
My modern daughter sighs.
'Oh mum- there are lots of really good dyes.'
'Even you can use this one.'
'It's easily done.'
You can tell a little lie...
Gasp...
Not for me.
I can't pretend.
I wonder why?



Was Mum right?

Was there really such harm in the plucked
eyebrow? The shaved underarm?

Never hair was waved.

Never leg was shaved!

Well.

What harm?

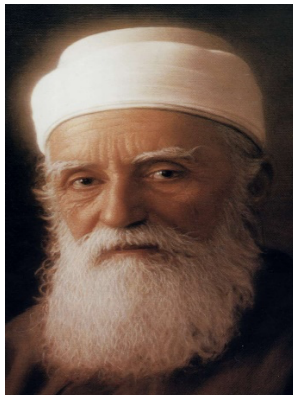
Not much... in perhaps

Just a touch?

Baha'i Quote:

The whole physical creation is perishable. These material bodies are composed of atoms; when these atoms begin to separate decomposition sets in, then comes what we call death. This composition of atoms, which constitutes the body or mortal element of any created being, is temporary. When the power of attraction, which holds these atoms together, is withdrawn, the body, as such, ceases to exist. With the soul it is different. The soul is not a combination of elements, it is not composed of many atoms, it is of one indivisible substance and therefore eternal. It is entirely out of the order of the physical creation; it is immortal

- 'Abdu'l-Bahá



DANCING WITH DANTE

(A black American pimp in San Francisco 1990)

I counselled this man, whom I met at a hotel in China Town, then later in Hawaii. His Mother had died when he was three. He told me it was recognized that 'the best pimps were men who had been left by their mothers at an early age.' His obsession was ownership of, and control over women, testing their love and loyalty in bizarre ways. He never dated coloured women. Dante taught me the power of movies, media, mainstream power. He had grown up associating glamour and beauty with 'whiteness'. I had some experience knowing coloured women supported what he said that 'black men rejected them.' I learnt that my 'prissy' judgments were inappropriate in a world where availability of honest work was a fantasy, and self-esteem came only from outsmarting the odds. Ethics and pride in his world were quite different to mine. Dante's proudest claims were that none of HIS women got hurt, were exposed to disease; and they trusted him. The last time we spoke, Dante was in San Quentin Prison. The chat before this last one was when Dante's nephew died in his arms, after a drug shooting. Crack was his great hate. Dante would never use crack or eat pork. His idols were Martin Luther King, and Mohammad Ali. I couldn't survive in his world, his culture, and love was a luxury he certainly could not afford. Henceforth, I penned this for him.

-Judith Light

Where is the one who will stand as a mother.
Always putting me before any other?
Who will serve and suffer? Forgive and forget?
Put aside all her own needs, until mine are met?
Mother's love. Come to me. Smile at my whips.
Swallowing pain, sweet caress on your lips.
Need bleeds from the ego of this boy,
clothed as man.
Where is the woman to fit his dreaded plan?
Testing. He's testing. Right up to the kill.

Will she rise to the call? Be slave to his will?
How far will she take it? Her 'undying love!'
Will she embrace, or break off,
chains sold as 'dove?'

Tested. So tested. They fail, and they go.
In their backward looking, longing to know.
What they did wrong? What would be enough?
Nothing, of course, can satisfy this stuff.
Nothing can ever ease the pain
Of a babe's frozen need
for unconditional refrain.

If not birthed in love, comes desperate greed.
That twists and contorts, and no other can feed.
Comes battering rage, that drives away hope.
Turns to crime, to alcohol,
and the mercy of dope.

Alone he must go, despite many who tried.
To star in his movie, to cling to his side.
Arms reaching outwards, hearts yawning wide.
Yearning to usher the 'lost boy' inside.

'True love' what is it?
That I'll suffer for you?
That I'll lie like a doormat.
Till your kicking is through?
But I too want lifting. Want us to fly.

Rise out of the mud. Reach for the sky
In your mud, I was drowning.
Would surely die.

A curse on your mother, to leave you so young.
Leaving you with women, as life's ladder rungs.
Your charm, your sweet words,
your calling of need.
Pull strong on my instincts.
My longing to feed.



But what of my longing
to be more than 'a nest.'
To be person. Companion.
Not face endless tests?
Above all, have you heard me
and know I am there.
Look me in the eyes
with invitation to share.
I too need some nurture,
unconditional care.



We are not so different, raised in this game.
Of life and the living, oppressed to be lame.
By god's of progress, a doctrine of greed.
That sees us as pawns in another's deed.
Of owners and bosses and dealing in gold.
In a world where people are bought and sold.
Where each of us must find a price.
Yours to be criminal. Mine to be 'nice.'

Our parents before us, and their parents too.
Were lost in the fever of what they must do.
To turn, as a good cog in this mighty machine.
To work quietly and swiftly, and never be seen.
To sneak little moments of pleasure and love.
Overseen by a cruel 'God.' Judgmental above.

'Tis all a great lie. What life is about.
To fill other men's coffers, and never to doubt.
That the system is master.
That God's on his side.
And our own sweet humanness,
a sin, we must hide.
That our sons must be tutored,
to go deaf to the war.
To the cry of the victims...
Blind to the poor.
Degrading the different,
the black, yellow, jew.
The young, old, the women.
Dividing many into few.

And so, we have mothers,
whose love dies in the womb.
Where the place of birthing
becomes more a tomb.
Where scientists tinker and play out a game.
Of helping the infertile
for their own power and gain.
Where our innate need for attention and love,

for joy, and for zest are controlled from above.

We are educated to technical skill.
To ignore intuition, to 'achieve' and to kill.
To see one another as foe in the race.
To where?
Where's the finish on earth's burnt-out face.
When the game has been played.
And the board laid to waste.

Is there hope? Is there future?
You and I maybe can,
pull the plug on the system.
Reverse the vested interest's plan.
You and I, in our thousands,
could shatter the lies.
Learn what sharing is; find mutual surprise.
In our sameness, in our humanness,
find great delight.
In putting the guns and the goldsmiths to flight.
Refuse to 'buy it.' Say 'we won't play'.
Sit down on their 'progress.'
See 'things' a new way.

Come on then let's try it. Dawn a new day.
Throw old hurts and hatreds away.
Let's find a love that wants not to judge.
Let go of the winning. Unchain the dove.
Rejoice in each other. Dance out the night.
For human is beautiful, and love is our right.

DEJA VU

(1985)

‘My mother said, daughter, my daughter.
How to escape it? Into your hand from me.’

‘My mother said.’
Here is a gift.
You cannot resist.
Where do I run?

‘My mother said.’
‘Your mother says.’ Is there no end to it?
(Ah, there's the rub of it!)

When will my mother...
Ever be done!
The echo goes on.



Judith and her mother – Ruth. Dining in CenterPoint tower Sydney

DORMEZ-VOUS, SONNEZ LES, ALARM BELLS

(1995 Anti-nuclear rally)

Nationalism. Flag waving.
Invitation to grave digging.
Beware when you drag your
coloured silks through the air.
Hang a political rag up there.
Genuflecting to lines of state.
Drawn on paper at a certain date.
Using river or road as divide.
Putting others – ‘worlds away’.
On the opposite side.

Kings and rulers must have a base,
borders to establish their own place.
Flags and emblems send men to war.
To die for the bit that they adore.
‘Ours alone.’ They proudly defend,
from all corners to the bitter end!’
Ah... Exactly so.

Bitter is the end of a race, we must know.
Will there be space for anyone?
When the deadly game of chess is done.
A world steeped in hate
will risks the whole board...
In a final check mate, mate.

Chess is an ancient game.
Kings and pawns, embattled.
In tactics of territorial claim.
Sounds like challenging fun.
But surely not to anyone,
who in miraculous grace,
standing on the moon,
saw hurtling through space.
Our universal womb...
A precious jewel.
Our only home.
Such a tiny place!

You Neanderthals!
Men of the past!
You must wake to a 'new age' at last.
Grow up and out of the 'boy's own' story
of days long gone, of heroic glory.
Stop parading Boyne and Bastille
Hijacking freedom's cost
with military pride, despite life lost.

Jacques Chirac. Your country's claim.
Is modernity and fashion's fame?
Culture, style 'Savoir faire?'
Wine and perfume everywhere.
In fact you're quite... Behind the times.
Your 'know how' has rotted.
Your perfume is slime.

Ironically, looking back
There was another French jack.
Jacques Cousteau. First to say
'We can't keep treating the world this way.'
France sang of 'La Mer' but 'twas he.
Brought it into our home, our TV.

Where are you now.
Cousteau of the blue?
Talk to your brother.
See what you can do.
Your mad namesake, more fool he.
Has tried to walk on water,
and hold back the sea.
Show him for all our ocean's sake,
Mururoa is no breadstick.
And certainly not his to break.



P.S - His-story is running still.
The expected sequel, I fear...
In three-dimensional realism.
The promoters tell us it's here.
A wide screen monumental farce.
And America in centre stage,
is proudly 'kicking arse.'



Is it all done with mirrors?
Who can say?
With today's infernal technological play.

Boys can't you see?

With your showing off trick.
It's our very own 'arse' you've managed to kick.
Don't try this at home, the illusionists say.
But I'm afraid 'at home'
is where all the brave bullies play.



DREAMINGTIME IN GUNNADO

(In the office of Hell 2010)

I come to you this morning from the state of
'Gunnado.'

The weather is so hot here,
and storms are on the brew.

Could be a cyclone coming. Better baton down.
Here potentially dangerous missiles
clearly do abound.

Like lots of aging stuff, to sort, file, dump and
clean.

In boxes and in cupboards,
there is more that can't be seen.

There is some perhaps forgotten - I'm not going
there.

Out of sight, out of mind.

Is the safest way and fair.

As I had that thought, Jude's mother's at the
door.

She the organizer, this work was created for.

Her message to the lazy séance from yesteryear-
'That Hell for good-for-nothings is ever
drawing near.'

The living family here are well, though
somewhat on my back.

And of course Jude's in a panic.
Wants me back on track.

But I don't feel quite ready.
It's not the best of times.
To get the journey started,
I should be in my prime.

I need a clear time, schedule
some tools and a good plan.
And for the heavy lifting shit.
Perhaps a helpful man?

There is other stuff- real pressing,
with deadlines really tight.
There is my favourite TV show,
I can't afford to miss tonight!

With just two hours left,
twenty years backlog won't get done.
There are those urgent emails,
rolling in from everyone.

You know the biggest worry
about the 'gunnas' here?
Chop one down and like triffids,
six more will soon appear!
It's frightening how they grow.
The moment space is clear.
I think it's really safer,

to stick with what is here.
Better 'gunnas' that you know,
than ones that will not wait.
Like old familiar friends,
they seem resigned to their fate.

Perhaps I should get out of here.
Cause it feels like Jude might crack.
Tomorrow is another day
and the 'gunnas' will be back!
Genius can't waste its time,
filing junk in 'Gunnado!'

Instead, I'll write an inspired poem for the likes
of you.

Oh, thank you... bless you...
I do loooove applause!



ELDERSCORN- ‘A CONSPIRACY THEORY’

(Christmas 2016)

Old Wives Tales wear wowser shame.
Mothers-in law- always fair game.
And the witches they are burning yet.
Hyped-up brave Mother ‘F***-er’s
gag the maternal ‘No!’
Her begging ‘don’t swallow it.’
‘Don’t do it.’
‘Don’t go there.’
‘What the Hell would she know?!’

She is the anti-Christ
of the exploiter's money God.
And the rope with which to hang her
is 'grown up'- 'Sissy' hate.
With politically correct jibes
of 'Nanny State.'

‘I am your 50-year-old daughter.’
She remonstrated.
‘I am sure I know more than you
about bloody tattoos.’
‘What would you know?’
Inevitable request.
And I knew it was not about tattoos.
But everything- Regardless.

The Penny dropped.

This is not a personal behest.
Every old person (female at least).
Is automatically dispossessed.
Her justification, her qualification to know,
was purely her age based right to claim
the normality of 'everyone' says it's so.

For me, the 'Ah-Ha' that shone through,
was the cultural nature of this voodoo.
So like the sexist shit.
I've lived all my life with it!
(That cancer never goes away)
Now it's secondary,
ageism has its day.
I ponder the fate of the poor, black,
disabled, aged female.
At the bottom of the social power pit.
Who hears her voice down there?
When might is right.
What rights exist
And who will listen?
Let alone care.

Bahá'í Quote:

Thy name is my healing, O my God, and remembrance of Thee is my remedy. Nearness to Thee is my hope, and love for Thee is my companion. Thy mercy to me is my healing and my succour in both this world and the world to come. Thou, verily, art the All-Bountiful, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

Bahá'u'lláh

ENCORE, ENCORE

(Ok ...just one more. Another Dame Nellie Melba. Who?
Australia's grand Diva of yore. Famous for Returning perpetually
for just one more. My 84th year of the dance of life- 2018)

Across blue ballroom skyline dancers are a joy
to spy as my clothes dry, in veranda breeze,
celebrate their fresh washed release from
conforming to and struggling through,
encompassing me.

Just so, I envisage it will be when
my body sets my spirit free.

But as a girl I promised myself (shock and
horror Mum) that I would learn to tap dance,
before my life was done.

Now a realization at eighty-four.
That I long ago learnt to tap and shuffle
through all that life flung through my door.
My performance was mostly ignored,
but a little bit of laughter and occasional
applause.

So I need a new pen-ultimacy.
A new achievement to set me free.
I long to live to see... Even help create a reality.
Recognition of our First Peoples ownership of
our Black History.

And even... the apparently unattainable
Treaty...

Eh?

Oh, Mungo Man your ancient sands
ridicule white history and Terra Nullius stand!
I tap danced in that 'Sorry' corroboree
and celebrated dreamtime history.

But there is so much more than apologize
we boat people need to do.
My penultimate move seems ultimately
to tap out more red, black, and yellow poetry.

Fame normally endows Poets that are Dead!
It's time to listen to one that's still vertical,
instead.



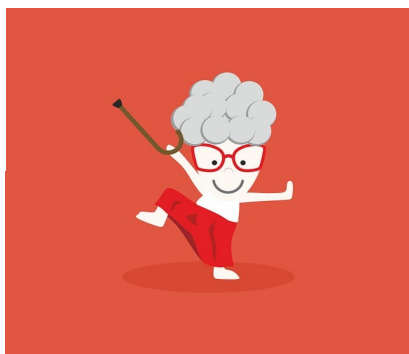
ENLIGHTENMENT & ME

(Glancing in the mirror and reflecting deeply 1995)

Everything is stretch and slide.
There is less of me that I can show
and an awful lot to hide!
Women are told they are what you see.
So, what kind of future does that leave for me?
My mother said my beauty was within.
Well, inside here, I am young and slim!
Actually... she meant my brain and soul.
Well, they are also 'on a roll'
downwards, as age takes its toll.
Well at least I have my wisdom
(The elder-person's gain)
it's just that when I offer it
the youngster's wince in pain.
I've always been the oldest
in each self-discovery group.
And now I am the oldest
in the local gymnasium troop.
Does this make me 'the last to know'
or first liberate - to flee the coop?
You'd think I'd have the answers,
with all my years of life.
Well, yes, some. But who wants 'em -
from a mother and a wife?

I'd like to be a Gurette.
You could worship me, and all.

But with my lack of balance
from such pedestal, I'd fall.
My beauty's not negotiable.
My wisdom is for free.
To make my fame and fortune now...
It must be poetry.
So, you lucky people,
I am yours.
Do what you will with me!



ESCAPE

(On the funeral of a 14-year-old aboriginal nephew who suicided -
1999)

I am a grandmother, in these latter days,
with a new Millennium on its way.
and I have something I am 'dying' to say.

It's fine that I, at 64 am slowly
moving to the exit door.
But fourteen... fifteen...?
These are the scores of a child.
Just learning to live and running wild.
Demanding proud, 'Mum. Look at me!'
Peeping through the door of discovery.
To the wondrous golden dawn of day.
With promise of love, adventure, and play.

But... Did we really notice?
Did we see, or even care?
That he was quite alone?
With giant monsters out there?
Monsters we welcomed.
They seemed like such fun.
Pumping the adrenalin of 'Run, run, run.'
And then we were busy,
all said and done.
Using magic 'rubbish' too.
Our anaesthetic to see us through.

At graveside mourning
in conscious light of day,
we faced our 'why's and how's',
of why it ended this way.

At last. The very last.
We want into your head.
Now. All too late. Now you are dead.

The lyrics he loved, the eulogy rock tape,
offered a vital key, a clue.
It was all about 'escape'.
A cardigan.
Designed to comfort and warm strung round his
neck, had strangled his form.
Two months missing and relentless decay...
Meant only his dentist could really say...
These remains from a lonely riverside...
Were the remains of a boy and a parent's pride.

Their treasured boy had already died.
His journey and future had no hope in sight.
No-one to turn to. Nothing to give.
No earthly reason for him to live.
Yes.
He had the good gear.
Posters, faces and names, C.D's, X-boxes, and
all the mad games.
Electronic 'friends' whispered all the while
that fast, loud,
and violent should make you smile.

McDonalds and Coke. All the real shiny things.
Sweet addictions-
smartest commercials do sing.
All is disposable. All thrown away.
Nothing lasts for more than a day.
Manufactured thrills, create urgent need.
As corporations make a killing indeed...
Collateral damage as their fortunes grow.

And for the children they offer a world full of
lies. Taunting the censors who ever moralize.
The oldies, the wrinklies.
'What would they know'
Hey, they're no longer a part of the show.
'He likes it.' They tell us. 'That's the new law.'
Ridiculing danger or 'What's that good for?'
For a customised child, the dreaded word is
bored.
Artificially inseminated appetite screams
for the cool, the latest, and the instant.
More.
What am I trying to say?
Silly old granny of millennium eve day.
Where have all the children gone?
And what is this terrible Hell
they must run from?
What witches brew? What spell?
Honestly my fear is our foulest deed,
to sell them, even give them away,

to slave traders of multinational greed,
and the devil has come to collect his pay.



Baha'i Quote:

‘To consider that after the death of the body the spirit
perishes, is like imagining that a bird in a cage will be
destroyed if the cage is broken, though the bird has nothing to
fear from the destruction of the cage. Our body is like the
cage, and the spirit is like the bird...if the cage becomes
broken, the bird will continue and exist. Its feelings will be
even more powerful, its perceptions greater, and its happiness
increased...’

~ **Abdu'l-Bahá**

LEST WE FORGET... INDEED WHEN WILL WE REMEMBER?

(Anzac Day 2002)

Lest we forget, say marching feet.
And down the years, and through the tears, echo
marching feet.
Resounding the call.
'They were hero's all...
and knew no retreat.'
Leather boots and felt, shiny buttons and belts,
slouches and caps, silks in the sky, songs, and
memories to make us cry.
Air force blue and jungle green serge.
Bedecked with insignias so diverse.
With all those medals on the chest, prove them
history's very best.
Youth sacrificed at war to save the rest.
'Fought for God and Country' they say,
so we can live in peace today.
Thankyou Digger you saved our land...

Oops... Is this Deja Vu?
(Is there a ghost coming through?)
Well, it's Anzac Day and I too salute.
I knitted many a sock to put inside your boot.
I lived on rations and saw dad cry, when they
would not let him 'Do or Die.'

Saw the white feather sent to him in scorn.

All because he wore no uniform.
I saw uncle come home with chocolates and
smokes'; such treats were dished out by the ton
to the fighting blokes.

I heard the tales of adventure in places, of
diverse language and swarthy faces.
I don't dishonour... I don't even forget.
For the pain and the graves, I have deep regret. I
pray that you are all, at last, at peace.
That with your sacrifice, God was pleased.

It's just that history is a might big book.
And there is much in there that deserves a look.
Why magnify in full living glory.
One small page in Australia's story.
Then turn other pages with a blind eye.
'We must move on,' is the common cry.
'No-one there that matters to me.
Nothing to question, or even to see.
No heroes. No glory. No family.

Is 'Terra Nullius' alive and well?
Where are all the black heroes who fell?
In the war when Captain Cook arrived.
Oh yes! We keep his name alive.

They fought for God and Country
and freedom from invading enemy.
No medals for the generations of marching feet.

No citations; sentimental music beat.
No tombstone or named resting place.
No telling of stories, or picture of face.
So it seems history is a biased
and most unfair race.

Those who lie buried in our own desert sands,
have no value like those buried in foreign lands.

So, at the going down of the sun, and again in
the morning, we don't remember them!

'Reconciliation', we cry.
'Brother shake it. Put it their mate.'
The past is the past and it's all too late-
to listen- to be sorry. To contemplate
what your ancestors died for,
or seek out their glorious fate.
Learn how they lived
and what made them great.
Your veterans, those still alive.
Why should we salute them for having survived?

Loud cry on Anzac Day is heard.
'They young must understand, how their fathers
served this, their proud homeland.'

Well Reconciliation can only start when we
move past denial, with an open heart we must
own our past, even make amends and to all.

‘Lest we Forget’ matures and extends to all that
preceded you, and me,
and includes our forbidden Black History.



Flag painted by Auntie Faye Smith for Lismore People for Reconciliation/Voices Together Choir. Established by Judith Light and sponsored by the Baha'i community of Lismore

Baha'i Quote: Truthfulness is the foundation of all human virtues. Without truthfulness progress and success, in all the worlds of God, are impossible for any soul. When this holy attribute is established in man, all the divine qualities will also be acquired.

-Bahá'u'lláh

Footnote-

Judith experienced Nelson Mandela's election and truth and reconciliation in South Africa and observed how effective this was in comparison to our own Australian reconciliation.

FROM HERE TO ETERNITY

‘Happy 84th’ took me through a door,
locking behind me the years before.
Delete button erased my memory’s score.
There is no going back anymore.

Now, let’s face it, what is ahead?
Deaf ears, clouding eyes and stumbling tread.
A stick keeps me vertical and eases my dread.
In my brain, all marbles remain intact.
(Retaining all one’s normal ‘fallacies’
is most fortunate, in fact)
Judgement and thinking all in gear
I’m going forward, without any fear.

Thank God for technology of this age
that will help me write another page.
Reinforced underwear is so discreet
(Not to uplift, no – burnt my bras long ago.)
Shout out for knickers that absorb a leaky flow!

But Hallelujah for the real lifesaver—
Licence renewed—I’m still a legal driver!
On life’s highway my future now will be
full speed ahead – (dare a lift with me?)
from here... to awesome Eternity!

GOD BOTHERING

(2011)

‘I'm leaving if God's mentioned here’
So ended the debate!
I was shocked... and I was puzzled...
by the intensity of hate
from a woman of our ten,
gathering as ‘sisters’,
to liberate from men.
Ugly ducklings becoming swans, amongst
genetic mates,
challenging the ‘turkeys’, who scored us second
rate.
Often, I have heard that anti God inflection.
As Adam’s rib lashed out,
in gender pain reflection.

That is why, I am a Baha'i,
embracing modern teachings.
With God the Unknowable Essence of All
Created Things.
(Now everything is sacred,
and science and religion are one)
Places and races sans borders.
One World Family under one sun,
and equality of sexes denies,
old gender preaching lies.

Limiting names and labels
can't encompass omniscient power
like radiance from the sun
or love's magnetic pull
that unites every-thing, everyone.
Such knowledge comes as enlightenment
whence dark day is overcome.

These are the times of science
when we strive to understand
big bangs and worm holes
and the creation of the lands.
or better still whole galaxies,
we try to take 'in hand!'
We feel we've come so very far.
From flat earth ignorance, witch superstitions,
not for us, old magic tricks, chanted repetitions.

Scientific academics, with the good oils for
today, say space is ninety percent plus black
matter (and they haven't understood even one
percent of that!)
Can't test, measure, see, feel, hear, or utilise but
know there's a 'creative force'
in our atmospheric skies.

There is no 'up there' place with heavenly harps
and wings, nor hell burning below, with hooves,
horns, and forked things.

Our dimensions have expanded. Quantum
physics all the go. The science of the sub-
microscopic expands our dimensions so.
Each eternal door leads us on, to just one more.
Which needs another key, on and on and on,
unto infinity.

Oh, little man. Ego. You yearn to be.
The all-knowing. The 'I AM.'
To be in control....
Own, use, sell, even destroy the whole.
A greedy, unsustainable, childish plan.
Think about the future... here on earth,
and in promised life dimensions to come,
before you make God a rival.
Join Satan's clan.
In Baha'i terms,
 'The persistent self' in man.

There is peace of mind in humble acceptance.
To limited comprehension of life.
Even the honest surrender of I don't know.
Perhaps it could be so if the prophets told us so.
Knowing how things work.
How they started. Where and when?
Is very clever even miraculous, but then...
it doesn't answer the biggest question in the sky.
(Monty Python's 'Meaning of Life' left us
without a clue and the Galactic Hitchhikers gave
up at 42)

We can even explore the universe and still the question will be:

Why is there this creation
and why the hell is there a
me?

There's a footnote to this God thing.
The 'non-existent' sent some down,
Prophets in every age and
we've thrown them out of town.

They came to show us how to live,
what to believe and why,
suing our time and capacity,
progressive messages from 'On High.'

All taught love of God
(And that is the Goodness within you)
and love thy neighbour
and even your enemy too.
They pointed to peace and goodness,
and some virtues we should do.

Study Religion as history.
And surprise, surprise you will see,
God's timeline through the ages
through clouds of fear and mystery.

Of course, they were rejected

by vested interests. Status-quo.
As we greeted the new with 'never!'
A terrified 'No. No. No!'

Crucified, imprisoned, tortured,
misinterpreted, ridiculed. Shot!
No fame or fortune for Holy Prophet's
for whom our souls so yearn.
But Krishna, Christ; the Budda,
Mohammed, and Baha'u'llah said:

'I am not dead, but with you still
and again and again, I will return?'
The prophecies to fulfil.



Baha'i quote:

But the question may be asked: How shall we know God? We know Him by His attributes. We know Him by His signs. We know Him by His names. We know not what the reality of the sun is, but we know the sun by the ray, by the heat, by its efficacy and penetration. We recognize the sun by its bounty and effulgence, but as to what constitutes the reality of the solar energy, that is unknowable to us. The attributes characterizing the sun, however, are knowable. If we wish to come in touch with the reality of Divinity, we do so by recognizing its phenomena, its attributes and traces, which are widespread in the universe.

- 'Abdu'l-Bahá

GREENIES

Have you heard about frogs?
They used to live under logs.
Now, disappearing,
as our planet we are 'clearing'
and extinction so much of its life.

Can we dare raise a child
never tadpole the wild,
or squealed out in fright
at the 'plop' and the 'croak' in the night?

Their bodies have served us,
but they've not deserved us.
I've heard children sob 'It's not right'
to the scalpel of science's bite.

And now, acid rain
is causing them pain;
and they leap, crippled flight,
from the bulldozers might.
Silent radiation
is a slow degradation,
and in poisoned soil,
they chemically 'boil'



From suit and tie,
we hear a cry.
and the 'Greenies'
say industry's meanies.

BEWARE:

Think of the miners of old.
They tested the depths of the hold
for safety of air before descending there,
with little yellow songbirds, soft and small,
in battered metal cages, dropped down to give
their all.

Now, not yellow, but bright green,
comes the same message so obscene.
Can we survive,
in a world that can't keep frogs alive?

GUESS WHO CAME TO RECONCILIATION

(Reconciliation Sun. 28th May 2000. I noted 'Aboriginal Reconciliation' so named 10 years ago, had become, just 'Reconciliation' to everyone.)

It was christened
'Aboriginal Reconciliation'. Not.
In truth, it was for our lot!
White Reconciliation. Our need for an exorcism
for our black deeds.
WE need an end to lying, denying, refusing,
using, victim abusing, taking, and breaking for
profit making; and rationalising away
(Rationalise is 'make right' in Dictionary say).
We need to stop this ridicule game, of labels and
names. To prove how unworthy the 'other'
fellow's claims,
(To our shame. Our present and on-going
shame.)
If worthy is required, when justice is being
hired.
What of the score, of convicts and rum-soaked
militia that brought us through the door?
Our right was based on colonial might
and Britain's need for a new prison site.

As a child I heard the blacks were 'gone' and
puzzled at the bit- our justification,
'They weren't doing anything with it.'

In retrospect, they've done nothing to 'it'
to compare, with our 'progressive' death;
destruction; rape and pillage everywhere.
We have much to be 'sorry' for
and much to understand,
and if we keep standing over them,
that's not the agenda planned.

Let's stop pointing at people,
who are down on their knees,
saying it's their natural way to walk.
We put them there deliberately,
taking with their land, food, culture, pride,
and even how to talk.

Some have survived,
though wounded and in pain,
using bottled and canned 'medicines' we gave.
White hands stretch out in 'reconciliation',
hungry for their trust.
Hands that could so swiftly
twist into fists again
to grab hidden agenda's lust.

Many crossed bridges with us,
took a giant step.
God help us if we lose it.
That slippery, sweaty, grip.

Was it 'Virtual Reconciliation',
just a Sunday game?
A feel-good walk. A little talk.
A moment in the sun.
Nothing really changing.
No tasks that must be done.
Then eternal be our mark of Cain.
Lady Macbeth's ruddy stain.
We'll be on an endless scrubbing game.
Victims of our own back flip.

It's we who need acceptance,
the clasp of a brother's hands.
Their forgiveness and their ancient
wisdoms grace.
If together our dreaming's can
in reality ever take place.
Can we dare to rejoice
in the First People's proud up-stand?
In this never 'Terra Nullas'
but always Gondwanaland.

One thousand six hundred citizens march across the twin bridges of Lismore on ‘Sorry Day’ in the year 2000. A huge moment for reconciliation in Judith’s life. On this day ‘Lismore People for Reconciliation’ presented their apologies to the Bundjalung Elders.



GUESS WHO WE HAD FOR DINNER?

(Anti-Nuclear rally Anzac Day 1997)

Who's Eating Who?

Lucky Country.

Clever Country.

Working Nation.

What?

Lucky we once were.

Clever and working. We are not!

All this grist, this political mill,
is just flavour for the pot.

Mad 'cooks', they mine and chop our roots,
carved up small, by small men in suits.

The very ground. The plot.

Our Mother sold at bargain sales

To fill a fast food greed;

with tasty chunks of our own tails.

Makes a short-lived, junkie feed.

Uranium tailings spice the stew.

Nuclear snack, for me and for you.

But wait. There's more.

Some desperate hands

of starving folk in other lands,

will take our waste away.

And they might even pay?

It will be out of sight.

So out of mind?

To the 'third world',
we will be so kind?
The third world.
Where can that be?
Hope it's far away from me...

Pauline talks of 'cannibals.'
The black man in her sights.
Well, it's surely not the Kooris
chewing up their own birthrights!
Ponder on a word like 'spoil.'
A prize. A gain. A win
Also means to waste, destroy,
to end in absolute ruin.

On the great blackboard of space.
We've yet to find a fairer place.
'Hale Bop' did not a saucer hide.
Maybe cups in space just ride.
If aliens do call... 'out there.'
It surely is to warn... 'take care.'
The universe keeps showing us
A very pock-marked score.
And I can't keep from wondering,
'Were they all like this before?'
Before some avaricious race,
passed ravenous across their face.
Leaving in their scars.
A graffiti most bizarre.

What would those Anzacs say?

If they were here today.
They died to end all wars,
not knowing the worst enemy
was right outside our doors.
And old soldiers who did not die,
still live with 'mystery' ills,
chemicals and radiation,
the slower acting kills.
Fighting an interminable war,
against bureaucratic lies.
Your nightmares are not from the war.
'You must have been a 'nut' before.'
'Your cancers and skin rashes.'
'Your child leukemic born.'
'The ones you cannot ever bear.'
'The ones you bear deformed.'
'Just get a real job now my friend.'
'Back to normal, off you go.'
'Stop asking silly questions.'
'There's nothing more for you to know.'
It's not any other nations that
will turn our home to sand.
It's our bob-a-jobbing politics
And our own, self-serving hands.

Gobble, gobble, soil, and stubble.
Poliwitchans round the pot.
Let me out of this grim kitchen.
It's getting too darn hot.
And I don't like this nukey stew.

It's looking a very poisonous brew.
Full of threatened species,
that have long gone before.
Like the stewed and bloated tree frogs,
that as a child, I did adore.

The 'cooks' ignore the growing hoards.
Demanding green and healthy foods.
They are busy toasting words.
To make us all feel good.
Like 'Job creation.' That's the go!
That will help the money flow.
A tasty gravy to hide the meat,
that is tough to chew and toxic to eat.

Like Chernobyl. Eleven years today
And so many children passed away.
They say the system is better now.
Our second war enemy showed us how.
With 30,000 troops a day,
to keep their frightened people away.

From our 'third war' enemy.
These ghastly dumps.
Needing nurture for 500,000 years.
These hungry radioactive lumps!
Safeguard pushers say, 'Trust me'.
Every con-man's theme song still.
Bad enough with the used car sale skill.
But this sale is a real kill!

'If it's not on. It's not on!'
So, we've learnt to say.
I can see 'it's really not on'
with these rapists of today.
Where is the rubber to contain.
Nuclear core? Acid rain?

Lest we forget. Lest we forget
It's our one and only earth.
Oh remember. Please remember,
what such a jewel is worth.
It's no onion that will grow again
No egg to be freshly lain.
Within this fragile dome,
we can't survive acid steam,
or hurl rocket pointed stones.
Wake up. Wake up.
And make a stand.
Fight once more Anzacs.
But this time for the land
and to our Koori brothers.
Forgive it.
If you can.
The all-consuming cannibalism,
of the ever-hungry white man.



**Only after the last tree has been cut down,
only after the last river has been poisoned,
only after the last fish has been caught,
only then will you find
that money cannot be eaten!**

EPITATH-
(Indian name for white
man is Wasichu –
taker of the fat)

MOTHER. A NATIVE TITLE

(One Nation – A child of quite doubtful origins)

Pauline.

You say you are a ‘mother.’

I am one as well.

Believe me, it would seem to me
like everlasting hell,
if one of my daughters cut off my hand
and stamped it as,
exclusively her own ‘En-titled’ piece of land.

We visionless little colonials must strive to
understand,
generations of family were living here,
nurtured by earth and sky,
that never attached to a nipple like ours,
so sterile, and barren dry.
‘Terra-nullius’? That title too,
was a blatant political lie.

They knew the land as ‘Mother’
through her heartbeat,
life-force, soul.
They recall her ancient stories,
remember her as whole.
Not carved up into acres
by the snarl of barbs of wire.
Barriers to living creatures
but laughed at by flood and fire.

Yes of course, WE 'love' Australia too,
but as 'Mother?'

No, not yet...

Except as whitest 'Mother- Goose,'
whose golden eggs we all collect.

I've heard sighed maternal lullabies,
as dolphins danced amidst her seas.
And when burning clouds raced 'cross her skies,
her shout near deafened me.

There were heartbeats,
unmistakable, at mystic Uluru
and in the women's cave,
mysterious sobbing,
there we knew.

I saw her draw fertility,
to a sandy island's shore
in turtle's magic birthing
as our radio blazed 'Gulf War!'

Fleeting moments I have felt her.
Her forgiveness and her pain.
As mining tools ripped into her.
Again. Again. Again.

I challenge you 'Pretender.'
(Your womb begot me NOT)
To hark to a REAL Mother,
out where the sun is truly hot.

To read her ancient wisdom,
amidst spinifex and sage.
And look back through her history,
turning desert's burning page.

But...

brace your small pale person,
for,

she's in menopausal rage!



HEALTHY WEALTHY BUT HOW WISE?

(Year of the big sell on vaccination 1995)

Today our god is science.
Vaccines and drugs 'the go'.
To deal with every ailment.
The skills all doctors know.
Yet. The superbugs, they multiply,
as drug moguls make the dough.
H.I.V. autism, asthma and many more.
Have environmental origins for sure.
Yet 'they' say these are just things
we need a vaccine for...
(Everything injected seems
to lead to just one more.)
Rivers, fish and forests.
They are not dying. So 'they' say.
When put to test of
proving the scientific way.

It is death we see and hear.
Nature crying out in fear.
The rising rate of allergies.
The neurones lost to beer.

Our children sick and going mad,
seeing a killing act or suicide
as the only choice they had.
Or flight into addiction,
with a substance, or a gadget
to replace a mum or dad.

Science and it's 'chemocrats.'
The ones we all called 'they.'
The ones we left in charge of things,
have a tricky job today.
To convince us what we know, and see
is not our 'real reality.'
Obscure statistics, straight from hell
'they' quote to show us all is well.
Why, the rivers are in good shape,
I heard it just today
(Compared with what, I did not hear them say)
Drought, acid soil, and algae clog
are natural phases anyway.

'They' did it with tobacco.
Gambled with our lungs, our life
and now the whole damned planet
has lungs that are in strife.
If the third world is the poorest,
where can first and second be?
I am praying for a fourth,
where life and people are worth more than
property.

Where we can find a true measure of what we
know as 'sanity.'

When 'ordinary' people raise
questing brows in doubt.
'They' label us 'green' or 'radical'
Don't know what it's about.
Radical means at the roots.
(I wonder do they know?)
At grass roots it is basic,
that's where the poisons show.

Our eyes and ears, our nose and touch,
our elder's anecdotal tales,
rate 'unqualified'... don't count for much,
especially when they threaten sales.
Stop telling us we're ignorant.
Our senses can't believe!
Don't tell us we are fit and well
when we know we can't breathe.
Survival's not negotiable.
Can't sell out to the greed of multinational pills;
or a man with axe; or technological thrills;
or to men of power, who tax.
'They' cannot profit, whilst we pay
'they're in this boat too anyway.
Microscopes won't change a thing
and platitudes will hollow ring.
If we wait on 'proofs' of science,
put continuing reliance
on the bureaucratic 'they.'

Together we'll gasp our final breath away.
and 'they'll not prove, it's very clear
that we, in fact, were ever really here.

Baha'i Quote:

As trustees, or stewards, of the planet's vast resources and biological diversity, humanity must learn to make use of the earth's natural resources, both renewable and non-renewable, in a manner that ensures sustainability and equity into the distant reaches of time.

This attitude of stewardship will require full consideration of the potential environmental consequences of all development activities.

It will compel humanity to temper its actions with moderation and humility, realizing that the true value of nature cannot be expressed in economic terms. It will also require a deep understanding of the natural world and its role in humanity's collective development -- both material and spiritual.

-Universal House of Justice



HELLO, WHO IS IT? WRONG NUMBER

(pre-dawn 2009)

You called?

I was sure you did.

I heard... thought?

Dreamed?

Wished or needed?

your hand's touch. Moist

lips... too much

Came here to answer.... No-one

Not even words appear.

Your place and mine... does not work.

Sleep cannot be, for the I of we –
dancing alone ... not done!

A cuppa? That will do it...

Not! Half-fun is none.

Day makes night run.

Was it just cupid?

An arrows flight?

so stupid

at night.

HELLO. CAN I HEAR YOU?

(Judith Light, a 'slow learner' 2018)

Some scientists have been known to say,
the human brain is hard-wired to pray.
What do we scream out, in guttural fear when in
danger or personal demons appear?
'Oh My God help me.' or,
in to-day's brevity, OMG!
Wise Aboriginal spirits,
through Jimmy Little's song said,
'Call out to Glory on the Royal Telephone.'

For years, my list of needs and greed's
went that way.
But I was some-what disappointed,
I have to say,
with satisfaction of my appetites and needs.
Or the removal of the pain and distress
that arose from past and present deeds.
Was the exchange busy, or the line dead?
Could there be too much
interference in my head?
Now that could be,
for in quieter times, eventually.
Baha'u'llah's words
came through to me.
His given prayers were a supplication,
food for the soul.
Spiritual nourishment

a plan for a better world
of Love Unity and World Peace, and for me?
A plan of personal service and activity.

‘Strive that your actions day by day
may be beautiful prayers.’
And ‘plant naught in garden of my heart
but the rose of love.’
And ‘work, in the spirit of service is worship.’
That I believe... is revolutionary.

Prayers that guide my working days.
‘Spirituality, with its boots on,’ I would say.
Not crying out help me! me! me!
Or begging my way into serenity.
Thank God Baha’u’llah answered me.
My answer...
‘Ya Baha’u’Abha’ and please
‘Guide me...protect me... make of me
a shining lamp and a brilliant star.’
And a servant to Thee.
Now and into Eternity.



Blessed Exciting Day.

Dear departed Jimmy
Little singing on the
‘royal telephone’ with
myself, and beloved
Elders- Aunty Faye &
Aunty Agnes.
Celebrating
reconciliation
at a riverside park in
Ballina.

*What a privilege to be in
the presence of such
Aboriginal royalty and
wisdom.*

LAST POST

Post menstrual.
Post-menopausal.
Oh, let's face it... Post men!
Post-divorce.
Post widowhood.
Post motherhood...
On the credit side must be,
the precious daughters, grands, and greats
mothered by me.

Post employable. Post taxable.
Post 'interest' to pay,
as the banks say, 'not negotiable.'
Send the 'old girl' away.
Post-feminist. Post activist.
Post sociable...maybe?
A few friends still come along,
to slurp my weak green tea.
Post being seen or heard.
Now come the invisible years.
The times of offering wisdom
that nobody needs or hears.

Now Shirley MacLaine, my mentor,
born the same day as me.
In a book she was writing back then said,
'Post' should not be.
Never say 'Never again,' was her philosophy.

So... at least I'm not Post functional.
On that I 'll take a bet...
Well maybe just a little,
but don't everyone's knickers sweat?
And I still possess all my fallacies
and am not Post – mortem yet!
(And I'll be back, and that's a threat)

Credit Side

30 years Nursing + 25 years one marriage and 5 kids and 7 grands
(2 steps) + 10 years second marriage 3 steps and 11 grands (give or
take some contraction and expansion of the steps)

One 6-month marriage and the sense to throw him out.

World's longest engagement to renowned poet-

Bill Henderson, turned into my fourth marriage yet. (3 of these 4
husbands became Baha'i- Which is a very slow and difficult way to
bring people into the faith...)

Been 35 years a Bahá'í + 11 years spent counselling and running the
L.R.E. (Life Resources Exchange) and 4 years boarding houses and
laundromats for a change. Spent 20 years in Lismore's Women's
Group's feminist political education forging ahead with 30 years of
poetic coming out after years in boxes under the bed going up in
flames with the house instead. 30 years of Reconciliation saying
sorry, crossing bridges and leading Voices Together Choir with
beloved Elder sisters Fay and Agnes and other aboriginal heroes to
admire.

5 overseas trips and 10 countries visited + miscellaneous life
experiments and experiences ...inspiring and stupid. exciting and
sad... rewarding and painful... + loving a lot of wonderful people,
being loved by some and totally loved once... the whole gamut.

Net balance... 80 (2) years of a life well lived

And the accounting is not yet done

For Shirley MacLaine and I...

The best is yet to come.

HOW MANY SLEEPS? ARE YOU THERE? YET?

(To Bill Henderson 10/06/2009)

You in the air.
Me on the ground.
Missing your touch.
Your smell. Your sound.

Prays for your safety and tests every day.
Go with and surround you.
Whilst you are away.

May the wings and the wheels bear you swiftly
back to
love's sweet welcome
on the
Lismore track.

Footnote:

Bill became a Baha'i, we married on 09/01/2016.

Sadly, passed on 18/06/2019.

And for me... at 90 year – no plans to re-marry... yet.

SNUGGLEPOT & CUDDLEPIE (WHAT SEX GAP?)

(Pre-Divorce after 23 years of marriage and five kids. 1982)

Once Snuggle pot and Cuddle pie
sat beneath a moonlit sky.
Sighed she too he...
'Oh, can't you see
the depth of love inside of me?
My dearest man, please let me share
the beauty that I see out there.
My soul is singing.
Our hearts could fly.
Come sail with me across the sky!'

Said he too she...
'Don't carry on. The moon just means the day is
gone. The work is done. Let's go to bed.
Onto the pillow with that silly head.
I'll give you what you really need instead.'

'Another dollar earned today.
When tomorrow comes, we'll make it pay.
Don't start with all that people stuff.
Can't stand all that emotional guff!
Course I love you girl,
being here proves that
and I always will
(If you don't get too fat!).'

'I ate the steak and kidney pie
but I haven't time for this starry sky!
Think I'll just go to the loo
and then find myself
something to do.'

Ah well. No hearts in unison to-day.
No lift off of souls is on the way.
Just join 'neath the sheets in usual play.

But you're a little hard to adore
when I speak poetry and you just snore!



I DID IT MY WAY!

I don't write to rules.
For examination by teachers and schools.
'Correct' words, as building blocks in a system,
are to them technology.
Hard working tools.
Or weapons for 'experts'
to brand the rest 'fools.'

Even my punctuation takes rebellious stance.
No military march in file, it skips poetic dance.
Sometimes running free,
It's bold two-steps, or even three.
It marks not time and stress.
But more-feeling! Or less?
Such limited servants of emphasis,
commas dots and such, need more elastic faces
to be lively point, in appropriate spaces.

My rhythm and rhyme.
Well what can I say?
They bumble along at will,
as words tumble out in play.
They speak from an inner drumbeat,
heart to head; hands to feet!

If this is not music to you.
go find something better to do
than listening to my stretching heart,
or yawning naivety and ineptitude apart,

or rolling eyes to heaven,
at my sorry lack of smart!
With a 'what does she know, silly old fart!'

Whether virginal crescent
or maturely full and round,
poetic moons enrich night sky.
Ignoring the What? When? How and Why?
Of those who must tread feet upon their space,
try to analyse such mysterious place.

In time every poet must come out
and you fellow poets helped. No doubt.
For a bright fleeting moment allowed us to say.
'Here comes some fun, or a thought for the day.'
Maybe not, as posterity's treasure to stay
but at least.

At least

I did it my way!



ICON, CAN YOU?

(On male reaction to photo of Navajo medicine woman 1991)

Yes. There is Nellie Perry.
Medicine woman, with eyes so merry.
Aged with nurturing,
the hands that allow no lies,
speak the composure of the wise,
and the combing of desert sands.

In turquoise beads and shirt of red,
she is Navajo from plait to toe,
in moon shaped face and noble head
in skin that has no fear of sun,
and a heart that embraces everyone.

She has survived the white invasion
and scorned the civilized persuasion.
Over frying corn bread bent,
in her shawl draped and feathered tent,
remembering dances to bring the rain,
her eyes are filled with waters of pain
for the grandchild she is feeding
(Abandoned by a daughter, bleeding
from white man's use, and alcohol abuse.)

What was it she said to me then?
Oh yes - it comes back - 'Don't trust men'.

She is my 'icon' you declare,
dominating my lounge room there,

and you scornfully point, ‘Look at that
you worship a woman, that fat!’

It horrifies - it shatters - me
that you look at a Goddess
and that's what you see -
a FAT woman, standing PROUD
(Such obscenity - should not be allowed).

Another wise woman - Germain
Summed it up quite plain -
‘Women see people,’ she said,

‘Men see shapes instead’.
So, FAT is all you see,
in a Goddess, and in ME.



Nellie Perry –
Baha’i and
Navajo Medicine
Woman from
Arizona USA
1988

INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY 2017

The T.V. screens, this day fill, with strong
women speaking out.

Women having their say... Just for them and for
just one day!

Yet domestic violence, every week, in this land,
takes the life of a woman by her 'lover's' hand!

'Down, sit, stay... and shut your face.' They
speak.

(After all she's a real 'dog', looking that way).

Instinctual? Or traditional?

Reality of the power game.

Justified by victim blame is eternally universally
at play.

Blamed for looking seductive, inviting abuse
and rape attack.

Blamed for inciting murder by speaking HER
mind, answering back!

She fights the belittle-ing social conspiracy.

Saying liberation and equality are really well on
track.

(Trumpism and hypocrisy says 'fake misogyny.'

Delete from vocabulary)

Does it stop when we are elder grey? Are you
joking?

Domestic violence to the aged is the fastest
growing crime.

Sexual significance; retail value; political power
all replaced by

wrinkled worried frown, draw derisive labels
and scornful jest
of not only 'silly old thing' but pathetic and
costly pest.

'What would you know?' dismisses learning of
years

sculpted by achievement and survival, love, joy,
and tears.

Can you go any further down?

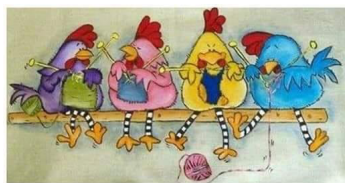
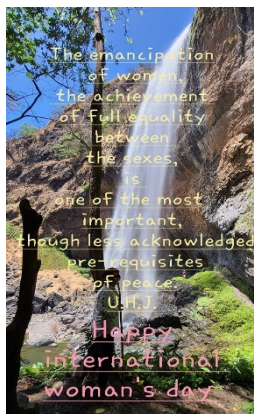
Indeed. Indeed.

I cry out for sisters homeless, ugly, black,
disabled,

unschooled and non-English speaking who sit
at the very bottom of this pile of s**t,
scorned and blamed for not making the best of
it!

Well... one old lady this woman's day,
echoes Amelia Pankhurst and wowsers past,
and has her woman say...

and it's not my last!



A True Friend
warms you with her presence,
trusts you with her secrets,
and
remembers you in her prayers.

IS THIS A GOOD BUY?

Would you buy a used car from this lot?
It's the most precious thing we share.
But, from another perspective.
It's our basest entertainment fare
and that makes me reflective.
and to-day's market excesses
seem overly effective.

Warnings on the packages?
at least the deadly ones.
perhaps all our appendages
should hormone strength display
and we should ban without a doubt
all the sample give-aways.

There are consequences deadly
The history is hysterical.
retelling stories 'blue'
of what the royals were wearing
and what and who, they used to do.
Some rather famous figures
lost wars and gold and heads
because they got the hots
and misbehaved in other's beds.
From Henry's eight
to that Marquis de Sade
some sticky endings
and some very nasty fads.

There's lots of rules of right and wrong
and popes and priests talk 'deadly sin'
It drives poetry and every song,
and makes bodies bulge and slim.
The gossips closely scan it.
It's the media's favourite dish,
there are some who want to ban it
and others only 'wish'.

But how shocking now
the profits made
from products to enhance it,
from high school to the grave
we seem pushed to chance it.
We just can't seem to get enough.
So, tonnes of money's being made
from some rather risky stuff.

The time we spend within the act
is relatively small.
For some the last event
they can't even now recall
and many worthy people
never tried it out at all.
But the time on fact and fantasy
that really does appal.

An act so brief. So quickly done.
Was it really meant to cost so much
when all is bed and done.

It's just nature's copulation
every animal can do.
If you don't believe that
make a visit to a zoo.
Where the babies keep on coming
without all this ado.



Bahá'í Quote:

Let your eye be chaste, your hand faithful, your tongue truthful and
your heart enlightened.

- Bahá'u'lláh

ITS ALL IN YOUR HEAD

(Is it just attention getting after all 2000)

I have a dilemma, and I don't know the question.
It's about the why and wherefore,
and to be of poetry.

Social commentary is my greed.
I have an analytical mind,
questioning rights and wrongs.
Committed to 'better' demanding solutions.
Hoping to inspire. Entire. Even lead.
Lead who, and where, indeed?

I see that for some it is all about pretty pictures.
No objecting or reflecting, no search for
meaning. Just beauty.
Others use words that can't be understood.
Is that what makes poetry 'good'.

Some talk of distant romantic times.
Heroes and such
showing knowledge of classics
rather than basics.

There are those who just writhe
and bleed on the page
and vent post coital pride or rage.
Proving love, indeed, IS a four-letter word,
and the antics it generates, somewhat absurd.

I am far too post coital for that, to be me!

Is it all just an invitation, into our heads.
a rumble through some attic of disused ideas.
a tender-centre of verbal memorabilia?
Well who wants to go there?
Perhaps you are the crazy ones. Not the poets?

Well anyhow if I am obscure enough
and only rhyme occasionally,
perhaps I'll finally become a writer,
of REAL poetry?

But. Then again. Why bother.
That's the dilemma, you see.
Let's get interactive.

YOU tell me.



Poets at work – 2024
Judith Light and
Andy Spencer

ITS ALL DONE WITH MIRRORS

(Reflections on war in Iraq USA vs Saddam Husain 1991)

‘We kicked arse,’ they said, and thousands lay dead.

You kicked arse. Well done. What fun.
And now oil and smoke, obliterate the sun.
What an act to follow.
Now, can you swallow
the fruit, of your boot?
Listen boys, didn't your mothers ever say
‘The bed that you make is where you lay.’

You kicked arse?
what a farce!
And have you learned,
as the lands burned
and we all choked on the air
being breathed there.
That your ill-gotten cash.
(Your lusted black gold)
made very costly ash?

Yep. That was quite a trick.
Tell me again. Whose arse did you kick?
You know, I think, friend.
That boot might have gone up your own end and
simultaneously, I fear.
You've had to lick some unsavoury rear.

Quite an amazing gymnastic sport,
but really hadn't you thought
to engage heart and head. Instead?

Gulf war. What and who for?
The trick you once did that was grand
was when you managed, on the moon to land.
and saw the planet was a jewel in our hand,
not a football to play with our feet.
Schoolboy pranks just cannot be
don't cry out. 'Hey mum, look at me'
As you are kicking round our destiny.
Put it down I say.
Stay boys.
Stay!
Or find some other ball with to play.



SOMETIMES I JUST...

(For those who remember 'Jackie Jackie' jokes; hopefully a thing of
the past 1992)

Tell me it's important.
The hours I spend on verse.
I always feel so guilty, and I hear my mother's
curse.
'Can't you be more useful'
Every time I'm slothful found.
Holding pen and paper, sitting 'lazily' around.

Her favourite little story was of 'Jackie' Yep. It
stinks.
Who was heard to say, one idle day.
'Sometimes, I sits and thinks'
But the punchline, quite outrageous,
the really 'funny' bit.
Was when he said, from vacant head,
'sometimes I simply sits.'

Raised in white work ethic,
a heavy dose for sure.
From my colonial background,
I keep wondering, who is 'poor.'
Especially when my peer group,
can't sit upon on a floor.
Ponder all this 'progress.'
Who and what, it was all for?

Well Mum, now that your slogging,
in the workhouse in the sky,
polishing the harps and making cloud-dust fly.
I have come up with a good one
that will surely make you cry.

It drove tears down my cheeks,
and I raged, and tore my hair
as a loving counsellor whispered.
‘Don’t JUST DO something.
Stand there instead.’
FREE from frenzied doing,
to win productive score.
You know that lucky ‘Jackie’,
he knew what we came here for.

If all the doing and the thinking,
could allow some peaceful time.
You might even want to listen,
to what I say in rhyme...?

Baha’i Quote:

Consider the pettiness of men's minds. They ask for that which injureth them, and cast away the thing that profiteth them. They are, indeed, of those that are far astray. We find some men desiring liberty, and priding themselves therein. Such men are in the depths of ignorance.
-Bahá'u'lláh

Aboriginal
Wisdom –
KataJuta
depiction of
God’s
manifestation
for this age – by
Phillip Obar,
Baha’i and Elder



JOANNA LIVINGSTONE SEAGULL

(An early discovery of how clipped the wings of a girl are, raised to
be good, and for marriage.)

See me!

I'm GREAT!

I hate.

The ones who said.

‘Shouldn’t.’ ‘Couldn’t.’ ‘Wouldn’t.’

The parent. Teacher. Bureaucrat.

The ones who told me where IT's at.

IT's NOT there.

And it's not fair,
to so mislead, cripple faith,
and stifle noble deed.

If your feet are stuck to the ground
don't try to impound my spirits, my rights,
try to block off my sites, set on the sky.

I am leaving you to your
‘How and why.’

I CAN FLY.

You doubted me.
Because you had no wings.



Baha'i Quote:

Humanity is like a bird with its two wings- one is male, the other is female. Unless both wings are strong and impelled by some common force, the bird cannot fly heavenwards. – **Abdu'l-Baha**

JUST HOW PERSONAL SOULD TRAINERS BE?

(Never better than Abbey and Ashleigh. Lighter since they got their
stethoscopes on me 2008)

‘Just keep breathing,’ they used to say.
It’s a great idea, by the way!
Only a personal trainer
could give such professional advice
oh, and by the way, on their T-shirts
that looks really nice!

But when the Abbey and Ashleigh duet
say, ‘slow and controlled.’ You can bet,
they’ll need all the help they can get!

‘Give Jude a break’... She ain’t ready for slow,
and control is not a style
a redhead can ever know.
And what is more, such a one over seventy...
has earned the right to be fast and free.

Haven’t you heard my little loves.
old age is no sport for wimps.
Nor is it for an overweight tortoise
that slides along and limps.

Behold the panicky dash of the hare,
throwing all caution to the wind
(Or at least, releasing it with care).

She knows now she is running late,
has to get somewhere, has a final date.
It may not be far, to that last hurrah!

Thanks girls,
for making Jude sleek and strong,
helping her very best living be done,
and testing the wind of her last frantic run,
before she crosses that finish line,
into the hands of the trainers Divine.

I don't think they are likely to be,
any more friendly and loving to me.
Thank my S.C.U. angels...

Abbey and Ashleigh



KEEPING ABREAST OF THE NEWS.

(1995)

Breasts are in... without a doubt.
Scientists have worked them out.
(Males that is... It is their biz...)

‘Oh Yea! O Yea!’ The headlines say.
We can keep breast cancer away.
We have found the naughty Genes,
giving us dramatic means.
We can vaccinate you all,
every-body... large and small.
Have you heard the ‘other’ news?
(You must, smaller print peruse.)
Exercise can do the same!
No chemicals. No risk. No pain.
Not much news, in what is free,
without surgery or pharmacy.
No sensational headlines there.
(That is, unless you own a pair!)
Then to keep them whole and fit,
they say, ‘just bounce them round a bit.’
Just burn the bra... let ‘em go!
Didn’t Germain’s lot tell us so?
Update: 20 years on...
No more weapons of mass uplift constriction,
and decorative demands on a mother’s affliction.
As an octogenarian, health, and comfort I know.
In letting them dangle and go with the flow.

LETTING THE HAIR DOWN

(1981)

Red hair - flashing neon.
'Sex and temper,' so THEY said.
Mother's warning, 'Better dead.'

Loose the braids. Away the pins.
No more fear. My female sins.

Pale skin! A 'no-tan' hide.
Hiding shrinking heart inside.

Was it really devil's horns?
'Endowment' with witch I was born?
Fly red flag. Cascade down.
Yesterday's chains.
Tomorrow's crown!



Judith releasing her 'crown' in the Arizona desert, with the Navajo Baha'i hogan. Image shows sand painting of Baha'i 9-point feathers, surrounded by Navajo rainbow serpent. (1988)

LIFE OR THE BOX?

(Discovering other women. Dedicated to the Lismore Women's
Group 1978)

There were times of dreams
put down as 'silly, girlish schemes.'
'Forget such rot. And heed our, should not.'
I learnt to see, all the limits on me.
Welcomed the box.
Sat safe in the dark; learnt to stay small
(there's no love for the tall.)
'If you are Little and Lady, I'll love you.
Quiet and pretty is fine.
Snuggled into my broad shoulder,
upon my knee. You'll be MINE.
We will make music together; you can dance to
MY heartbeat.
You are my ego's fodder.
When you look good and be sweet.
Came a whispered learning.
A sister-shared surprise,
reaching out from peer yearning,
I started, at last, to rise.
Out came the ugly duckling,
brought alive by the magic 'me-too.'
Caring and sharing from others,
antidote to the scorn of brothers.

WOMAN POWER!

Bursting through.

I want to tell you, and thank you,
you sisters who helped me to grow.

Together we shattered the myths and the lies.
Broke out of that box and reached for the skies.
Lit up ignorant night, released Pandora's flight.
Together, we DID. We lifted the lid.

And now.

If my brother wants me.

It's going to have to be a brother,
who can stand beside
the GIANT that is me!



Footnote:

Not only thanks to my wonderful women friends from the Lismore Women's Group, but to the only counsellor available in those days to see me through my divorce.

Beloved Harry Freeman – head psychiatrist of the Richmond Clinic psych hospital.

It was he who said, 'You need a PEER group.'

To which I replied, 'Where am I going to find a peer group?'

And he said, 'You are a woman, aren't you?'

Coincidentally the Lismore Women's Group was announced in the Echo Newspaper.

Joining this group was one of the most powerful steps
in my journey to light.

LIGHT FANTASTIC

(1995)

Life's a dance quite a prance.
Round and round heel and toe.
Brain in trance. Fast or slow.
Soft shoe shuffle or rap and tap.
Or, repetitious child measures hop and skip.



Perhaps your step is silent mime,
without the pulse of music's time.
Or twirling, swirling cut the air
with flouncing fabric's fluid flair.



Irish jig. Is that your gig?
With whistles strings and drum
and folk in circles run?
Or is square the go, with an 'allamanda'
and a 'doh-see-doh?'

Ballet's toe bleeds its pain,
in satin shoe, with arch astrain,
lifting high, in-flight puffs of flowers white,
seeking sweet applause as an urgent cause.



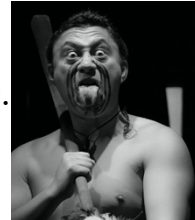
Fluttering feather fans expose flashing eyes,
haughty nose.
Or clapping hands, and tossing head
suggest a challenge, fiercely said.
And a bull-fight's bloody dread.



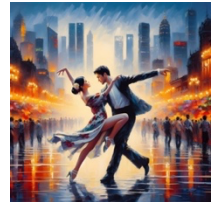
Aboriginal corroboree is all stomp and tell,
and after a pipe smoked, Indians do that as well.
Stories and feelings of the day,
related in a sacred play,
and to keep the evil spirits at bay.



Torres trait islands and Hawaii hula and sway,
in grass skirts, flowers, welcome say.
But Māori haka is a warrior stance
with shout, grimace, stomp, and prance.



Egypt dancing by the Nile
supplicates the Gods above.
And night-clubbers, Western style,
brush cheeks in something they call love.
Rock and roll's insistent beat,
generates addictive heat,
numbing adolescent pain
with platters for commercial gain.



In Thailand it's all hands and grace,
wooden masks and painted face.
Slap and hop go Morris Dancers.
In Vienna horses prancers,
And then there is the Scot.
He blows bagpipes such a lot,
or dances in his plaids
with swords too, for the lads.



Twist and turn.
 What do we learn?
 Are we all just windup toys?
 Or is it ritual flirting,
 between the girls and boys?

Any step, we're all the same,
 in this universal game.
 And celebrating with our feet
 is reconciliation, to a beat.

I think that's what feet are for,
 NOT for marching off to war.

Indeed, it's difficult to hate,
 when you're on the dance floor, mate.



Baha'i Quote:

We have made it lawful for you to listen to music and singing. Take heed, however, lest listening thereto should cause you to overstep the bounds of propriety and dignity. Let your joy be the joy born of My Most Great Name, a Name that bringeth rapture to the heart, and filleth with ecstasy the minds of all who have drawn nigh unto God.

We, verily, have made music as a ladder for your souls, a means whereby they may be lifted up unto the realm on high; make it not, therefore, as wings to self and passion. Truly, We are loath to see you numbered with the foolish.

-Bahá'u'lláh

OLD LADY UNDER THE SHOE.

Old Woman.

wizened witch of fairy tales,
and nagging bitch to modern males.

Your words are a poison apple,
to Snow White and the boys
and to every 'real' bloke.

You are just life's joke.

At best you may be ignored.

At worst, ridiculed and abhorred.

Useless, cast-off skin of mankind.

Peeled away and tossed behind.

You may have learnt a thing or two,
but computers now know more than you.

'Knowledge has a shelf-life',

imperious technobrats say,

of, at most, six months

to the use-by day.

so, what's in and old woman's head,

must indeed, be long dead.

Well this old witch points a finger,

and worse,

makes prediction of affliction

and millennial curse.

Trash the elders of the land,

indigenous or invader.

Wipe out their footprints in the sand,
their knowledge of the way.
The secrets of survival, in their elder-say.

Then someday you'll turn to your computer
and the Media parents,
that raised you 'Cool'
and find they gave you a 'one night stand'
and left you an exploited fool.

Their guidance, with commercial speed,
conditioned you to instant gratification
and lower appetite's greed.
Laughed away caring of Mother
as a blight you didn't want or need.
Once her body had given its harvest.
It's genetically modified seed.

Then ghostly elder women,
will be haunting you at night.
That if you had only listened.
This might not be your plight.

At last, too late, you'll find,
there WAS 'something' we DID know,
and remember, sadly, how often,
we tried to 'tell you so'.

Women live the longest,
and Nature has its reasons.
For giving them extended term,
such generous elder season.
Just as denuded country,
grows what the farmer calls weeds,
that in truth nurture and nourish,
the soil's recovery from greed.

So, Creation keeps old women around,
experienced mothers, she does abound.
Ours is the voice of conscience.
The moral guiding light...

Turn your back upon it, my sons
and you face a dark, scary, night.



Baha'i Quote: The world in the past has been ruled by force, and man has dominated over woman by reason of his more forceful and aggressive qualities both of body and mind. But the balance is already shifting; force is losing its dominance, and mental alertness, intuition, and the spiritual qualities of love and service, in which woman is strong, are gaining ascendancy. Hence the new age will be an age less masculine and more permeated with the feminine ideals, or, to speak more exactly, will be an age in which the masculine and feminine elements of civilization will be more evenly balanced. - **Abdu'l-Baha**

LIKE DROPS OF RAIN

(Of Love and Pain 2003)

(The loss of my Husband David Alexander - 08.12.2002)

Multitude are the farewells...
The empty shells that sound of the sea,
abandoned on my shore...
Left by you, for me.
Little goodbyes are daily routines
as you slip through the gap,
of my gaping heart...
And pass away... day by day.
A process, of a thousand cuts,
slices my heart and carves into my guts.

The first haunting was your gentle tones
sounding beside the telephone,
as you answered our calls
from beyond the grave.
You on tape...
It had to go...
All the family dreaded it so.

But a deeper pain was aroused by your smell,
wafting from the cupboard, like moths in flight,
shaken by movement and blinded by light.

Where is the 'brand name' to that perfume,
and is his soul mingled with it,
and at flight in the room
recalling that sweetest of sharing,

that most intimate of gifts?
How can I stand that fragrance,
without its loving hand.
Or worse still, the fact
that it's fading away?
Or toss it to the laundry,
as someday... I must?
Already time is melting it,
into mould and dust...

Your 'once were treasures' I must dispose.
Those precious tools, your trusted slaves
deserve more than a pawnbroker grave.
Your fear for their fate in another hands.
Do I betray if I give them
away to just such as those?

Your written word in that familiar script
from hands now forever illiterate.
Do I chop in irreverent pieces
as I did medical records, licence, cards?
That was hard!
Vital statistics, vital no more.
Reduced to a totally pointless score.

The much-loved clothes you wore.
Do I bundle, into bags for the poor?
Not that that green coat.
No not yet!
You were so handsome in that

when first we met.
Those well-worn work boots.
They must wait by the door,
for at least another month or more.
Photographs. Frozen time on film.
They must certainly wait.
Captured embraces, amorous traces.
Our personal history.
Some cleaning contractor must
decide and seal their fate.
Dispatch them in flame, or in council bin.
It's up to him.
I had to consign razor, toothbrush, comb,
to an icy land-fill home...
Lying useless and alone,
as indeed do the very hands and arms
once in command.
Now giving the earth the strong embrace.
The loving touch I miss.
Oh, how I miss and need, so very much...

That was the first of death...
That was the worst of death.
The coldness of your hand
that I had held so dear,
lying totally unresponsive.
Offering only fear.
Or is the full moon worse than that...?
Spiritual viewings we shared so intensely
worshipping together her reflection on the water.
That is a bleeding I cannot stop...!

Nothing preaches solitude as does the full moon.
How can I bow to her, how can I live,
without the one who truly knew me,
could share my thoughts in silence,
connected with my very soul?

But there is a miracle amongst the remains...

It's the Love.

It survives.

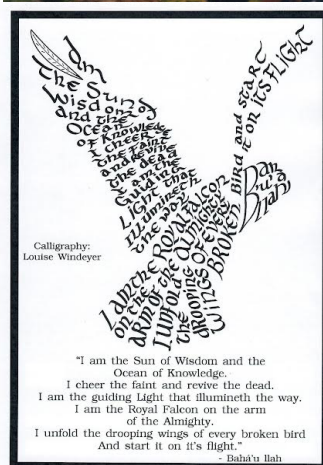
It is alive!

When you have been adored,
it is palpable.

Like a ghostly throbbing cord,
and even grows and deepens.

Could it really be eternal.
This 'stuff?'

I wish you all to know
such a love.
To have such a friend.
To the very end.



MALE HANDS I LOVE

(Tribute to my husband David Alexander 1992)

‘I thought you'd get a young one.’ She said.
‘When you decided again, at last, to wed.’
Surely a spunky young stud in your bed?

Is that all you know?
Sad that you should see it so.
Truth is compatibility of years,
that have surmounted adolescent fears,
is a much better way to go.

I look with love on sinewy arms and strong
from working and struggling, hard and long;
scarred and creased with sweat and strife.
from wringing survival from challenge,
and bearing a well-lived life.

They wrap me in hold of sweet understanding,
offer sharing, and caring –
not greed's demanding.
They comfort and cushion me through the living.

So generous, so quietly, patiently, giving.
Yet they can swing me in a Bush Dance swirl
in a sense of play I never knew as a girl.

Those hands have given and taken so much;
wise and kind, and so respectful of touch.
They have built a home in the wild.

They have birthed and raised a child;
fixed and repaired; painted and pared;
made mouth organs play;
and, tear-soaked, waved loved ones away.
They have mastered ships,
yet, can still caress lips
with sensuous, tender, feeling tips.

No drug driven shake;
not nicotine baked;
wholesome and clean;
never clenching and mean.

Yes, hands that have bandaged a grand-child's
knee.
THESE are the hands that mean love to me...



The full moon rises
behind David and
Judith as they marry at
the Lismore Lake on
the 10th of October
1992



LINE DANCERS ON MY VERANDAH

(Saluting 75th year of the line dance of life 2009)

Across a blue ballroom sky,
line dancers are a joy to see,
as my clothes, in veranda breeze,
celebrate their fresh washed release,
from conforming to
and struggling through
encompassing me.

Just so, I envisage,
it will someday be
when that same body
sets my spirit free.

But first I do declare,
I've more dancing to do
down here,
for I have always said...
I must learn to tap-dance,
before I am dead.



Baha'i Quote:

To consider that after the death of the body the spirit perishes is like
imagining that a bird in a cage will be destroyed if the cage is
broken, though the bird has nothing to fear from the destruction of
the cage. Our body is like the cage, and the spirit is like the bird...if
the cage becomes broken, the bird will continue and exist. Its
feelings will be even more powerful, its perceptions greater, and its
happiness increased...

- Abdu'l-Baha

LITTLE BOYS LOST

(2009)

‘Stolen Generations’ – they also exist
on the Christian, white male privilege list,
of Boarding School boys still alone,
who never recovered from leaving home.
Mother forsaken; family taken,
the frozen nipple of ‘class’ pride,
leaves nagging hunger, deep inside.
Where bastardization wounds abide.

Crucifixion is practiced there,
innocent children impaled to bear
punishment for ‘born in sin’ guilt
‘Ministered’ to an angry God’s hilt.
Thence arise crippled fathers
astride angry thrones
in flash ‘castle’ homes
from whence to send away their sons
when those little boys’ time has come.

Privilege and ruling power
demand an awful price
of isolation and pain,
and little boys’ balls in a vice.

Footnote:

Sadly, still relevant in 2018 with report of Royal Commission into Institutional Abuse. An extraordinary ‘coincident’ in Judith’s life-Father, Brother, Husband’s David and Bill all products/ victims of private church education with its cruelty and classism.

TRAVELLING LIGHT

(2019)

‘Well Bill you leave me to the last word on that
Bonsai you were not. And travelling Light??
Three storage sheds my garage and under-house
storage;
Half of the master bed-room; all of the spare one
Even a caravan out there all full of jobs past
And gonna does put off to the last.

Don’t panic the treasures, memories plans
Even great Aunt Amie’s ashes, are in good
hands

I am disposing with awe and loving respect
a great life of struggle and pain
trying to create perfection
lubricated with volumes of poetic refrain
desperate to be heard

To record it all in words.

Now into a rubbish skip

No no not Great Aunt Amy
she was scattered respectfully
across the sea at Redcliffe
as she had asked to be.

Know you have been heard Bill and loved
indeed.

It was a privilege to be there,
with your daughter Helen and brother Jim
when so blissfully you were freed,
escaping a body that had become total agony.

Leaving the roots, dreams and memories
 and all that excess baggage for me
 You left on wings of your favourite prayer.
 You so loved to teach the school kids,
 about becoming a brilliant light and shining star.
 Now that's travelling light.
 And I see you out there,
 a slightly cheeky know it all twinkling in the
 night.



Bill Henderson

Co-editor of The Mozzie.

Was a man of many parts:

- A fine poet (his poems always had sound, sense and feeling)
 - A brilliant mechanical engineer (he could fix any boom gate in Australia)
 - An effective man of business
 - A wise critic
- But most of all he was a man of strength, integrity, gentleness, and love.*



He was a member of the Bahai faith and gave religious classes in schools. As his strength decreased, he found it difficult to climb the steps. Corndale Public School built a new handrail just for him.

Mozzie Editor Ron Heard, contributors and staff send their deepest sympathy for Bill's wife Judith, his family, and his many friends

40K from Mungindi 2406

I grew up with sheep –
 Round about twenty thousand;
 We ate one every week.
 Even more rabbits –
 I helped my dog chase them
 Until the myxo fixed them.

My first memory –
 At two I caught my small hand in a rabbit trap.
 It held me captive
 Up the bush for two hours
 Until my dad tracked me down.

Mitchell Grass country.
 Creek only some long deep pool, until each flood came.
 During the worst drought
 I walked the cows six slow miles each day to drink.
 I was nine.

Frequent big bushfires
 The summer I turned sixteen.
 I slept fifteen nights out of seventeen
 On the ground near the bushfire, ready to fight after dawn.

When our trucks fire pump broke down,
 I kept up the flow with its hand primer so dad could still
 use the hose.
 Right hand only – my left arm still too weak from polio

Three short weeks later
 My dad was dead at 49.
 Mum moved to Brisbane
 To be near my dear sister
 And city schools for three sons.

By Bill Henderson Lismore NSW

MOTHER GOOSE IN THE AIR

(Returning from world trip with David &
17 stitches in my eyebrow)

Jack and Jill had climbed some hill to fetch this
pail of water. Down Jill did trip; spilled lots of it.
And came back from the caper. Suitably, all
wrapped up, in vinegar and brown paper.
She shouted loudly from a head, now deeper,
angrier, wetter, red. And this, my friends,
is what she said...

‘We made it through the earthquakes.’

‘We dodged the cyclones heart.’

‘We flew the world in awesome jets.’

‘That could have dodgy parts.’

‘We travelled through some traffic.’

‘That moved at maddest speed.’

‘We missed the Dengue fever.’

‘Took no poison in our feed.’

‘The water did not make us sick.’

‘No gunman on us tried to pick.’

‘But there we were, a day from home.’

‘Off went the light. I was alone.’

‘Did I slow my frantic pace?’

‘Of course not. Isn't life a race?’

‘The handrail, it just disappeared.’

‘It was not what I ever feared.’

‘Just goes to show that danger
is not where you expect, and one thing I have
learned is- treat a staircase with respect.’

NEW DAY DREAMING TIME

(After the 'Heart of Australia. Calling' Festival in the Year of the Indigenous People. Where a black and a white man became spiritual brothers. (This poem contains words that will offend. They offend me! It is reality - history. A direct quote of the time, engraved in my memory. Like all our 'black history', they must be faced and owned. It happened. Our very own Holocaust - Judith Light Oct. 1993)

'How would YOU feel?' He said,
'If a big black buck nigger knocked on YOUR
door, Asking YOUR daughter to wed!'
Oh, the shock of anger.
The bitterness. The dread.
Issuing forth from a much beloved head!

'See. Trouble is Jude,' now embarrassed smile.
'Give them an inch - They'll take a mile.'
So he was advising me - here's the clinch -
we must take the mile,
and don't give them an inch.

Thus the colonial plantation man
responded, when one of 'colour'
reached for my hand.
'Chinese-Malay. Why, the kids could be
BLACK.'
Imagine the shame of a colour 'throw-back!'
Oh, the arguments into the night
I had with my father, over black and white!

So enchanting in song.
The aristocratic Kings College voice,
tore me apart when its prejudice was strong.
You know, we entertained,
at our Christmas table.
All sorts of strangers away from their homes.
Throughout my childhood I nurtured a fable,
of being kind to others that seemed alone.
Regardless of colour, ignoring creeds.
THEY were the targets of our kindest deeds.
We, the benefactors. They received.
And this was 'equality' - so we believed.

Here, to Red Heart of this rugged land,
I came with my painful colonial brand.
Came as Baha'i, with longing to heal.
Asking forgiveness for a past all too real.
Of brutality; plunder; ignorant deed.
All the long story of conquering greed.
Came with another from my father's land.
One who last year won my hand.
So like my father, with eyes of blue.
Tall, gentle, 'best' British educated too.

But this one understood my pain.
Also wished history could be done again.
Feared not the native in nature or man.
Conquering and owning were not his plan.
He too knew the longing, heard the call.
To recognize and reconcile, sacredness in all.

A black kite, like Royal Falcon,
soared cross the skies
As the gentle Elders' wisdom
and a spiritual vision in deep dark eyes.
Bridged the gap that creates 'others.'
Drew black and white together, as 'brothers.'
And declaring love of Baha'u'llah.
Two good men became Baha'is.

Such a small step through space.
Such a giant step for the human race.
In this sandy, red, and moon-scaped land.
The dusty palm of God's Almighty Hand.



David Alexander and Neville Buchannan declare themselves as Baha'i in Alice
Springs at the Heart of Australia Calling Festival
(1992)

NO HANG UPS

(1996)

My heart aches to see
a child up a tree.

Green arms up-rise
across the blue, in surprise,
of adventurous call,
beckoning beings, less tall.

Time, now gone by,
I hung in the sky.
So much to see,
Fantasy set free...!

Many years have slid past,
I think, since I last
smiled delight to see
clambering limbs, in a tree.



We have gained some machines
but have lost, so it seems,
fun and frolic, nature's way...
good old climbing play.

Don't think there'll ever be
machines, as lovely to see,
as a child clambering up a tree.

NOT BETTER DEAD

(Ninth Anniversary of Stand-up Poets 19/07/2000)

In 'The Dead Poets Society'.
They read literary works of the Dead.
Dug up 'Buried Treasures' of former days.
Poetic reincarnation in a way.
Well. It's nice that we can verse about as
'Standing Up' Poets...
Breathing in and out.
Well, most of us anyway,
though some do come through as 'spirits.'
So, to say.

And who can we thank,
for this poetic think tank.
This chance for present day posterity.
(If not, advanced prosperity)
Inspiring us to sit for hours,
scratching through the head.
Frittering away our days.
(As my Mother would have said)
Trying to wax a lyrical
before we went to bed.
Missing 'The Bill' on T.V.
(Well, 'The Bill's' not what it used to be).
Trying to rhyme.
Elegant and elephant,
in ideological significance.
Indigenously perspicacious.

Verbal magnificence.

David Hallett.

That's who.

Gathered here this poet's zoo.

Memorable greatness he let loose on the podium.

Along with some most forgettable odium.

Full nine years ago.

So time DOES run... when having fun...

And when (and someday it will be)

all is said,

and dung.

But back to 'Living Treasures'.

That some poets come to be.

Found hanging around, in the local gallery.

This has, indeed revealed a fact,

for ALL LISMORE to see...

That David, as well as being greater.

Is much prettier than me!

(In full frontal too, no don't panic.

It's just my head you see.)

But I'm proud to hang out with him,
as his admiring progeny.

For I never would have 'come out.'

Never taken a stand.

But for David's gentle pushing
and always helping hand.

Many others he has pulled up too,
some shook in awesome fear,

and some just brazened up,
with courage from the beer.
Some delighted, some ignited,
and yes, some were a bore.

We cried and laughed and stifled yawn,
but most came back for more.
And ALL increased their stature,
as they went on out the door.

Wholeness, maturity, spiritual power
are in the number nine,
That is Baha'i belief.
And that makes this a special time.
The Stand-up bards have crossed,
a mysterious and awesome line.
You may not make it to eternity,
or be dug up in days to come.
But brave, thinking, and creative,
you are living heroes of mine...
and I thank you, Everyone.

David Hallett
and Judith
receive Australia
Day Awards



ITS OVER

(Divorced after 25 years marriage 1982)

Divorce.

Of course!

It was 'best', you see.

This piece of paper sets me free.

So what's this pain, inside of me?

Why am I host to a moaning ghost?

The bond was strong, the scar is great.

The pain is awful,

when love becomes hate.

We called it 'love'.

It was need.

Even greed.

We had to feed,

on each other's beings

to have reason for existence.

It became mere subsistence.

We tried to make each other whole,

two with one soul.

Now I thank you for a spirit free.

My self-stretching.

Becoming ME.

I let go of the frozen fear that

no 'significant other' was near.

Nightly, I craved hands in loving touch.

But...as half of us. You were too much.

NOT GREAT MATE

(Divorce 1982)

If the only way you can relate
is to a sensuous body,
then listen mate.
I'm more than a body,
and it's time to see,
that being your pet,
and playground zone
is surely killing ME.

To you this might sound rather tough,
but I now resign
from being your 'stuff.'

Baha'i Quote:

If divorce taketh place, the spiritual love and affection between you should increase, and ye should become like a brother and sister. In short, the foundation of the Kingdom of God is based upon harmony and love, oneness, relationship and union, not upon differences, especially between husband and wife. If one of these two become the cause of divorce, that one will unquestionably fall into great difficulties, will become the victim of formidable calamities and experience deep remorse.

-‘Abdu’l-Bahá

OINK, OINK

(Response to Ken Lambert ECHO 24/12/1997.
Response to Reclaim the Night)

‘Stage hogging, poetic twaddle.’
Oh yes. The ‘boys’ are back.
And reaching for the oldest tool,
in sexism's shoddy pack.
The sickest, and most childish game.
Ridicule, in a catchy name!
Life's hard-won experience,
in the university of years.
Tested daily, by sexist oppression,
and my own female fears.
Struggling to discover and comprehend
the rules to cut the ties that bound me,
and grasp assertion's tools.

I raised my five daughters,
without tragedy or loss.
And ran my own businesses,
for 40 years - The boss.
(Independent growth and industrious existence,
without drugs, or welfare's hand of assistance.)

I was not advantaged by beauty of face,
best education, or parental privileged place,
and mostly despite the ‘support’ of man.
I have succeeded, for a 60 plus a span.

Yet...
In the columns of the local rag.
Comes the inference that now,
I'm just a bag.
A woman.
Aged, and fat.

How obscene.
For such voice to speak out,
such body be seen.
At a women's rally to reclaim the night.
Who gave the old girl
such a 'stage-hogging' right?
Let's have rational debate
by some Mister Bigs.
(Never dare say it - 'chauvinist pigs')

For weeks now, it has poured 'cross the page.
As the Boys hurled statistics,
like pellets from slings,
suggesting REAL women,
don't suffer a thing.

And that there are men terrified at night
when predatory women come into sight.
Are they telling me that I've not known the fear
of having to deal with males full of beer.
Not known the longing to walk the night free,
of the terror of stalking feet behind me.

Not lived through attempts to discount my mind,
make me acquiescent, sweet, silent, and kind.
Never flinched at the scorn,
that I did not have 'It.'
Later echoed by jibes of
'You just need a bit.'

Is my word just 'twaddle' because it's in rhyme,
or it sounds poetic in metre and time?
Am I 'stage hogging'
because of my sex, size, and age?
Tell me then, what to call men,
filling the page with screeds and screeds of
figures and chatter on domestic violence
and do women matter?

Can't you see. You just demonstrate we are right.

Women have much to 'reclaim'...
And it's not just 'the night.'



ON TOP

(This poem won an award in the Fellowship of
Australia Writers Competition 22/11/1991)

Man in pain, don't you know,
there is no danger in a tearful flow.

Don't you know, hurt, locked inside
all caged up by silly pride,
comes with rage, to rend the veil,
exposing the boy, within the male.

Let it out.
Share what you feel.
Own you are human.
Find you are real.
Then we will know.
All will see
The lie of the sex-gap.
Twixt you and me.

It is o.k. no more than that.
We need your tears for where we are at!
Don't let's look for one to blame.
Let's just stop the back-biting game.
Heart to heart; soul to soul.
Share at last, one common goal.
Strength is not in being right,
admitting wrong, is real might!

I've met so many who could not lose.
They ended with flattened nose and booze,
with battered wife and crippled kids.
They stayed 'on top' like trash can lids,
sitting on garbage, rotting away.

All because, they couldn't cry at play.



THE NEW MILLENIUM (RECLAIM THE NIGHT)

(29/10/1999)

A thousand, and three Nines of lives, they've
tried to skin the cat.

In this new Millenium, let's just put an end to
that! "Pussies" of the world Unite in two
thousand evolutionary ways.

Let's all stand straight upright.

Don't tell us we're "post-feminist"

That IT has all been done.

When India still slaughters babes not born a son.

When Africa still mutilates,

a woman's precious parts,

and Western films portrays us,

as victims or as tarts.

When pre-pubescent appetite is where the men
are at, when women politicians still get labelled
"fat" and adolescent women die, to have a shape
like that.

Reclaim the night? First. grab the morn.

Rise above dismissive yawn, cleanse yourself of
all their porn.

The guilt's not yours. don't wear their shame.

Just wash away the crippling names.

Let your feet unfettered walk; disinhibit
forthright talk.

Come on out. Brave your way, proud in harshest
light of day.

We tried it on, being male. Disguised feminine,
ditched the veil; swore and smiled at jokes
unfitting; wore overalls; tried public spitting.
We quickly learned how to smoke; lean on bars
and swill like blokes.

We drove trucks, descended mines; used
hammer and screwdrivers fine.

We can jump, run, throw and kick; even learnt
the racetrack tricks.

We swing a racquet and hit quite hard;
put out the garbage; even. Mow the yard!

We can handle cattle and manage the land.

We have even mastered, the one-night stand.

But was it the bra, we needed to burn?

Like age acting young, destroys itself in turn,
we went down, not up a rung.

Upwardly liberating, we went down into dung!

It was our gagged mouth, and the
loudness of men

silenced women's word,

ensured we were not heard,

and the bound feet,

that made us slower on Commerce Street.

Kept us invisible; and made us incomplete.

Oh for the day when in public place.

We do not have to lip read,

what comes out of beauty's face.

When the virility of a flower,

becomes symbol of REAL power
that none would DARE to pick,
to trample on, or kick.
Oh that you could see, my son,
life and woman, are really one
and like dawn's mist,
can never be held in a clenched fist.
You also need to understand,
you're not made RIGHT,
by the weapon in your hand.
No sense, truth, or life ever come
out of the barrel of a smoking gun.

Let woman take the lead.
No more victims plead.
She must not be the foe.
Hear the truth in her "No",
and follow her moon.
Her iridescent glow.

Then perhaps the stars,
will cease to be prison bars and
we could find balance,
in Venus and in Mars.
"Boys", under such a moon,
you just might,
dance with your sisters,
reclaiming the night.

And let it be known once
more that until woman and
man recognize and realize
equality, social and
political progress here or
anywhere will not be
possible.

- The Promulgation of
Universal Peace, -**Abdul**
Baha

PASSING ON

(1993)

Oh you birth them, and you bear them,
and you feed, and you prepare them,
for a sacrificial journey known as 'life'.
You care for them, share with them,
try so hard to be there for them
through the ups and down,
the victories and the strife.

You ache when they reject you;
smile when they protect you;
dodge 'it' when they dump on you each day.

But they can never 'under- stand' you,
'Old fool', they'll likely brand you.
'What would you know' they will taunt
at the 'wisdom' that you flaunt,
and you're 'picking on them',
when you talk 'that way'.
And insist on interfering with their play
BUT...

You know that with your passing
they will weep, and then start asking
'why' they never thought to notice
WHO you were.
As their own young bring them pain,
Life will echo back again
and memories and wiser thoughts will stir.

In this sentimental phase,
they might even, sing your praise.
'A good parent' they might grudgingly confer.

Life's roses DO smell great
but, at graveside, come too late.
Grief stricken we do wish we had done more.
But through death's backwards haze
if we too direct our gaze,
we'll see the mother that
WE never knew before.



Judith's five precious daughters-Robyn, Janine, Christine, Vanessa,
Shelley- Judith's proudest moments and greatest gifts
in her Journey to Light

PEACE IN THE LANDS OR PIECES IN THE HANDS

(A grandmother's lament 1996)

I watch...

A Grandmother, on the other side of this planet.
She carries with deadened face, not looking
down.

On the fruit of her harvest.

Her maimed and bleeding grandchild

One leg and one stump - limb blasted away by
'Land--mine!'

Life force leaking and clotting in dirty rags.

She is the one.

Left bearing.

(Women must always do the 'bearing')

But now in arthritic limbs, neath shrinking
bending spine.

The shattered remains,

no others are left to claim, 'mine.'

Desperately searching for a safe place.

Crumbs of food. Clean drinking water.

(a murky puddle, in a bomb crater)

She is powerless.

To understand; to protect from; to stop!

The men's political game.

The young men carrying arguments

Of nationalism, rights, and guns

Justifying all the Rambo 'funs'

The games of war
Played out right here,
At the family's very door.
(Now reduced to a gaping hole
Into post-historic stone age)
How far have we come.
When all is fought, and done?

This is the end.
For generations that have mocked.
In fairy tale, and bar-room rail.
Aged woman's voice and wisdom.
Ridiculed, discounted, by labelling
'Old', 'Nags and bags',
'Bitches and witches', 'Mothers-in-law'.
Now left with the pieces in their hands
Whilst power crazed men
stamp possession on lands.

I well fed,
sleeping in my Queen-sized bed.
Have superb technology with which to watch.

I read.
Powerlessness, in the deadness of her face.
I feel my own, from my decadent comfort.
My seemingly 'safe place.'

But I too hear them out there.
The same young men flag waving.
'Developing' 'Progressing'
Toting 'free enterprise' games.
Whether commercial or bureaucratic,
With ideological sounding words and names.

I watch. And I hear.
And I turn to God with my fear.
Who else will heed an 'Old' woman crying.
For babies, and the natural, dying.

I reflect.
On a commercial once seen.
For a shiny red sports car, speedily obscene.
And the slogan. The salesman's lure.
'Your Mother will hate it.'
She did. For sure.

I think of...
My sweet, healthy, dressed 'cool' grandson.
Two-years old, he grabs my car keys.
And turns them instantly, into a gun.
'Look grandma' he said and blew off my head.

You ask me. 'Why must you be a Baha'i?'
It is a light that helps the world to see.
The reality of our Unity
The oneness of our kind.
Maybe even find.
Balance in two wings.

Woman and man.
Religion and science
as One Universal plan.
Show sacredness in everything to the boys.
Before they are utterly, consumed by their toys.
And dare an 'Old' Woman say.
'Help them learn to pray.'

I am. 'Just-a' woman,
praying for peace in my lands.
Rather than be left,
with their pieces in my hands!



Baha'i Quote:

O ye thinkers of the world ! O ye philosophers of the Occident! O ye scholars and sages of the earth! A threatening black cloud o'ershadows, which ere long shall envelop the horizon of humanity; an impetuous tempest is ahead, which shall shatter to splinters the ships of the lives of mankind, and a turbulent, furious torrent shall soon drown the countries and nations of Europe. Awaken ye! Awaken ye! Become ye mindful! Become ye mindful! Thus in the spirit of co-operation we may all arise with the utmost magnanimity and through the Favor and Providence of God hold aloft the flag of the Oneness of Humanity, promote the essentials of Universal Peace and deliver the inhabitants of the world from this Most Great Danger!

-Abdu'l-Baha

PERSIAN SUNRISE

(May 2004)

On the day of nine...
The number of totality.
When the sun was midway cross the sky
and the month was one they called July,
in the middle of the nineteenth century,
the Persian Government declared in Tabriz
a day of prophetic fatality.

There was a job to be done
by 750 Armenian Christian guns,
to satisfy the fear and hate;
to forever shut that beckoning gate;
to put out that brilliant sun.

Shrine of Bab in
Haifa Israel



The smoke cleared...
The silence fell.
and not The Bab,
but his would-be assassins,
stood facing the fires of hell.
The Gate was not closed; the Bab was not dead.
He was dictating words of sanctity to his
amanuensis instead,
and Sam Khan and his militia,
in remorse and horror, fled.

In the end,
a Muslim contingent stepped up to the line
again, taking aim, on this eternal day of nine.

Now, through God's will,
and His predestined time,
two young men's bodies,
under the smoke's black pall
hung lifeless on the Tabriz barracks wall.
It was over at last?
The deed was done...?
Oh no... Not at all.

Oh foolish little men, who think they can kill
God's sun with silly little bullets,
through the sites of a man-made gun.
Remember how Jesus hung on the cross
and made there His greatest call.
How the hand of God reached out from there
and touched us, one and all?
Just so, The Bab shone brighter yet
and His Gate, it opened wide,
and thousands then, and millions yet,
have found their way inside.

Even now, our entire great universe
and its people... Every last one
are being enlightened, know it or not,
by Persia's God-given Sun.



Martyrdom of
Bab by firing
squad in 1850
by Persian
Authority
(now Iran)

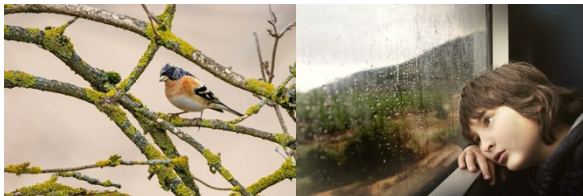
POINT OF VIEW

(1986)

‘Oh dear. what a pain
the sky is cloudy,
down comes the rain.
What a miserable dreary day!
Now I can’t go out and play.
Curmudgeon glowered at the sky.
Shook his head and grumbled.
‘Why am I such an unlucky fellow?’
‘Why isn’t that miserable sun yellow?’

Sitting near him in a tree
was a little bird called Lucky Me.
Singing,

‘Down comes lovely rain
gunna make things grow again.
Bringing flowers full of honey
golden juices sweet and runny,
and grasses bursting full of seed.
All the hungry world to feed.
What a blessing, what a day
when cool sweat rain
comes down this way.’



PONDEROUS FECUNDITY

(Northwest Island camp holiday 1991 radio crackled 'War in Gulf')

Weary... weary... work- heaving up the land.
See the eyes. I swear she cries - but - THEY say
it's just the sand.
Well -that's what scientists 'understand.'
That belies the gasps of delivering pain, denied
by man yet again.
THEY say it's not real - what man cannot feel.

I 'understand' all too well
the depth of the sighs, within massive shell
(Safe cover at sea, but on land
- a burden from hell.)
She must drag her weight high on beach that is
dry where those tiny flippers designed to swim
become a disability grim,
they were meant only to go, through water's
silken flow.
Cruel joke here is being played, bidding eggs be
laid on Mother Earth, in quixotic birth,
leaving cradling seas, for foreign medium, and
many enemies.
Old and great one - Goddess of the sea,
we, like greedy 'paparazzi' gain so much from
your pain.
Your implacability; your prehistoric fertility.
We praise a plan that brings to man
through fecund might, such miraculous sight.

Term of 50 years, culminating in fruitful night.

Gulf war at our door to-day,
seems impossible, worlds away.
Totally unreal.
Oh turtle mothers help us heal.
Our tortured nest.
Our earth of unrest.
Implant in our hearts the kind of faith.
It takes you to hollow, with gentlest skills
a tomb to a womb, your fertility fills.

Your endless cycle of life bypasses
our fuss and strife.
You care nothing for our fight,
our issues of wrong and right.
Yet you will be first to receive the 'spoil'
from our sucking, and spitting,
and fighting for oil.
As you do what you must in whom,
or what, do you trust?
Why do I feel so moved to say,
as you challenge each year this slope
that in some profound, and inexplicable way, not
science, but you, give me peace and hope.



PORTRAIT OF OUR ELDERS

(On viewing photographic exhibition 'Portrait of our Elders' by Michael Aird. Images were from 1869 – 1920. Sold as exotica with mocked up artifacts. Females posed bare chested in a time when pornography and white nudity was unspeakable. Some of the saddest images were voluntarily recorded by Aboriginal families in search of respect and status. Regardless of the style or content of the image one thing was consistent- the eyes. -1995)

The eyes.
Dread-full eyes.
Speaking imprisonment, pain and loss.
(Unjustified loss, and powerless pain)
Alienated humanity, in a frame.
Degradation in fine lace.
In studio posed, aboriginal face.

Walker of dusty plains,
Singer to the fire's light.
Used - abused - confused,
and trapped in unspeakable plight.

Devoid of joy, of hope.
How did they stay alive at all?
How did they cope?
How can descendant's bear
to view such images there?

Incarcerated truth,
beyond daring or caring.
The lights of the face,

turned completely out,
to hide the anger and hate,
that would throb, no doubt,
within.

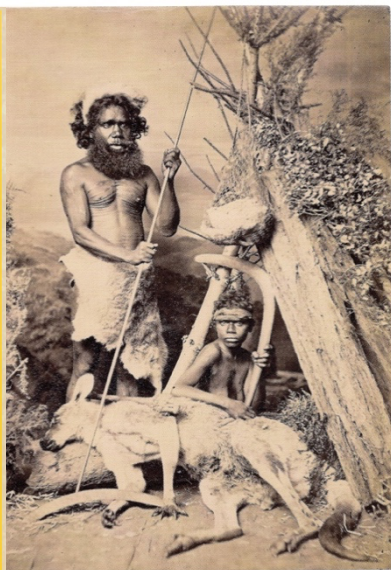
Emotional paralysis,
is brick wall to our sin.

What rages, like licking flames at me.
Is the unspoken, never answered, 'Why?'
And there is the sleeping threat.
The suppressed cry.
In criminal ligation,
of collar and tie.
Comfort is so bizarrely denied.
As assumed 'beauty' casts nature aside.
For gowns buttoned up in pride.
For stiff formal chair.
For coiffured hair.
Such respectable civility.
Such outrageous humility.

Search for a smile if you dare.
No levity is there.
But see such a 'waiting'
Such a patience for the hating.

It's all there - in the eyes -
Powerful points of focus.
Beautiful in their intensity.
Unfathomable in their density.
Tragic and reproving.

The eyes - oh the eyes.
Totally still, and ever so moving -
Such eyes!
God forgive us for what we have done.
I cannot dare ask,
such an enormity
of the people of the sun.



POTS AND PANS MAY SOIL MY HANDS

(Sink side insights 1997)

My hands.
They DO say 'housework'.
I was warned that should not be.
Well, let me tell you,
at the sink, I am spinning poetry.

Can you taste my poignancy, in your coffee cup?
Can you feel my greatness
when your toast is burning up.
Do you know that love and care,
along with lofty thinking,
are blended in the mistress pieces
you're eating up and drinking?

And, if you think my kitchen sinks
not shining, as it should.
Then listen to my poetry,
for I hear it's pretty good.



'Don't let your hands say housework.' - Dreaded
warning to the housewife in 'my day'

PRECIOUS DIALOUGE

(2010)

Dialogue? Let's dialogue the word.
Dia - meaning 'through.'
In dictionary say, it is
'Con-versation, between two.'
Thoughts, feelings, requests, and ideas.
Passing through space and time,
sometimes with music, rhythm, or rhyme.
Words that inform or express,
share or caress, uplift or depress.
Can be verse...or worse.
A rhyme lasting through time,
or immediately lost and dispersed.
Can be loving, comic, or terse,
with touch or without, or eye interplay.
A reaching out to stroke, or giggling in play,
striking in anger and pushing away.
Passing from now to then, from then to now.
Along wires from spires to receivers.
A preaching to faithful, or non-believers,
sent in sound of morse, or feel of Braille,
or fingers and hands in the deaf way.
Those who pray, dialogue with God this way.
Computed in dots or waves.



Bahá'í Quote: The heaven of divine wisdom is illumined with the two luminaries of consultation and compassion. Take ye counsel together in all matters, inasmuch as consultation is the lamp of guidance which leadeth the way, and is the bestower of understanding.

-Bahá'u'lláh

Freely given or commercially sought.
Brush stroking canvas,
or on musical instruments.
Hands strum, drum, tinkle, or run.
Brass or didge mould the breath.
All a statement makes. All communicate.
May be clearly articulated and heard.
Translated or manipulated by secrets and power.
Misunderstood and received or not,
long remembered or speedily forgot.

We are not validated, do not reality know,
if we cannot somehow dialogue, to and fro.
If we are not ever heard - the listener is vital too.
He also serves, who hears messages coming
through.
One hand clapping in a forest is non-existence,
that's true.
We long to be heard and death is often preferred
to the solitary confinement,
leading to mental derangement.

Does any of it matter?
or change anything?
Who knows?
But unbidden it comes, unwritten it goes.
Dialogue. Food of the soul.
More important than meat.
More valuable than gold.

QUEUE JUMPERS- UNDER THE SOUTHERN CROSS

(2010)

The spiritual connection with the land
deep within Aboriginal man.
I like others scoffed to hear,
but yearned to understand.

Europeans doubted, ridiculed, denied
and in greedy justification,
violently defied.

‘They weren’t doing anything with it.’ My father
often said, dismissing the connection
of bare-footed generations,
with the so-called ‘logic’ in his head.

We sailed the wide sea,
searching to make life whole.
To find a home of wealth
and rest for our alien souls.

Identity and personal grace
were not for us in this ‘foreign’ space.
We loved not its bush and barren miles,
its burning sun; its ancient smiles.

We called it a ‘young’; a ‘new’ place.
Even ‘Terra Nullius’, to our disgrace.

At Uluru I felt a heartbeat,
echo of ages of black dancing feet;
the spiritual mystery of creation,
powerful yet discreet.

I had felt that way before,
on another far distant shore.
Where towering mesas proud up-stand
amidst Arizona's sand,
immovable against endless space
in an eternity of place.
Prayerful with Indian music, dance,
and turquoise set Navajo grace.

‘Alone.’

This white woman has always felt,
a jigsaw piece of fate seeking home;
identity; tribe; and a congenital ‘likewise’ mate.
Then God’s teacher for this age,
opened for me a door,
revealing the really big picture.
The ‘more’ I was asking for.

He spoke of indigenous wisdom of
oneness and sacredness in people and place.
‘Move together as one great family’
and find the ‘Greatest Peace’.

Baha’u’llah from a prison in Akka,
called black, white, yellow and red.

‘Love is the magnetic force, uniting everyone.’
He said, ‘Science and religion are one.’
And softly a piece of puzzle fitted perfectly,
and a weary search was done.

A quantum world of strings of light,
and mysterious dark matter.
An expanding universe with multiple
dimensions and parallel lives.
Must eventually put an end,
to obsessive ego chatter.

And need to control.
Carve up, and own.
Destroying the cosmic whole.
‘Doing something with it.’
Takes a terrible toll.

Recently ‘Catalyst’ experts admitted
the last 10 years of scientific glory.
Though exciting and amazing...
Tells a most contradictory story.
‘We keep making mistakes’, they said.
But that's what we like...

‘It means more exploration
lies beckoning ahead.
It's the journey and the mystery
not the answers.’
He laughingly said.

We can never ‘understand’ and know.
But with religion and science
as wings on one bird,
Baha’u’llah has said, ‘We can take flight and
grow gratefully, lovingly, joyfully, Faithfully, in
life's eternal flow.’

Like the First People walking here did...

Baha’i Quote: Scientific knowledge is the highest attainment upon the human plane, for science is the discoverer of realities. It is of two kinds: material and spiritual. Material science is the investigation of natural phenomena; divine science is the discovery and realization of spiritual verities. The world of humanity must acquire both. A bird has two wings; it cannot fly with one. Material and spiritual science are the two wings of human uplift and attainment. Both are necessary -- one the natural, the other supernatural; one material, the other divine. By the divine we mean the discovery of the mysteries of God, the comprehension of spiritual realities, the wisdom of God, inner significances of the heavenly religions and foundation of the law.

- Abdu’l-Baha



Aboriginal
People doing
something
‘with’ it/ ‘for’ it

RAPPORT OR REPORT? SO TO SPEAK

(Year of divorce 1992)

‘The assumption of omnipotence.’

Germaine Greer said.

‘Why can't such succinctness
come out of my head?’

I've written poems trying to say
how I hate it, when men talk that way,
with unquestionable authority.

Right or wrong.

Making statements didactically strong.

Another author. Lately pointed out,
women make rapport communication,
trying to bring closeness about.

But men give report talk,
telling how it is!

Making sure the point is
something you can't miss.

Over to the ‘other’ side
the listener must go.

A receptacle to be filled,
the one who does not know.

A ‘real’ man has the answers,
and of course, knows what to do!

He'll swing into action,
and ‘fix’ it all for you.



Makes it hard for the 'twain' to meet,
when he offers derring-do feat,
whilst she is seeking to be heard,
and meets stone deafness to her word.
Validation and support,
of her own feelings and wisdom,
she might even have sought!

Or closeness. Rapport. Sharing.
It's wearisome, the game of
'Watch me mum.'

Of being impressed by 'manly' daring,
proving of right and Godly might.
They get to be yawningly wearing.
Men's trouble with self-disclosure,
is based, I think, on this need to be right
to be standing off at omnipotent height.



A dear friend penned a preface to his book
just before dying,
taking a last look back on his life.
Years so incompatible
with his long-gone wife.
The lost sharing; the death of caring.
Closeness to life's end.
Ridiculed the need to pretend.
He wrote...
'Wonderful things happen, it is so.
When a man can say, out loud.
'I don't know.'

RECONCILIATION ALL AT SEA

(April 26, 2016)

A joyful morning prayer,
a reconciliation moment in time,
came to this reflective white elder
on a virtual first ever ride.
I rode with 'once were warriors,'
and universal parents of land and sea
united, and blessed us, and set us free.

Gender, age, race, and history's disgrace
disappeared as young black surfers stood
strong in identity, healed of the past's misery.
A glow with trophied proof of awesome ability,
It was a beautiful thing to see!
First Peoples empowered in nature
as it was always meant to be.

Thanks boys, for easing an old woman's guilt
as a little hope for the future, I felt
and a moment of spiritual unity
in a truly God-given day,
with us children of the universe
with our earthly parents at play.



REFLECTIONS

(Sunset moment 1990)

Sunset clouds burst 'cross the sky.
Moon aloof in wisdom,
stands,
like letters from The Lord,
awaiting dark to fall,
and burning inspiration lifts,
so she can fling the echo back
like song,
in flight,
abroad.
in silvered soft recall...



Baha'i Prayer:

God, guide me, protect me, make of me a shining lamp and
a brilliant star. Thou art the Mighty and the Powerful.

- Abdu'l-Baha

DODGING THE DUMMIES

(May 2009)

I lose all clear sight when hit in the eye,
by soggy flying dummies,
spat from great height, in virulent flight.
The thing that hits the tender spot
is knowing it's a clumsy shot.
The pain in the gut that caused the spit,
is a child's reaction to some very old shit.
And I didn't deserve it.
Not a bit!
But I can fire one back.
It's true.
And it won't really be aimed at you.
This is what hurting children do.



BLACK HOLES

(May 2009)

Science has discovered it at last,
a speed slide pathway from present to past.
Such exciting discoveries lie deep inside!
All that we ever lost, at last we will seek and
find. Everything most precious in value;
the things you should not have erased;
things you knew you'd need someday, urgently;
youth silly memorabilia, souvenirs from 'then';
even some secrets to be hidden from the ever
prying 'them'.

There will be hundreds of knickknacks, tools,
pens, pencils, and biros galore. Those pesky
bobby and safety pins, you have been endlessly
searching for. All that stuff you put in a 'safe
place', the one young memory proudly records,
'oh what a good place to store and find it when
needed for sure.' (What we used to call
'Gremlins' in the days of yore.)

Of course, you know that place where
everything disappears forever more.
Now you know it's the mysterious black hole
with appetite ferocious and mean.

That is a real repository,
for all precious items no longer seen.
You're going to have to say 'sorry' to the
someone's you accused all along, of having
moved, borrowed, or stolen the stuff.
How could you have judged them so wrong.

S.A.V.E.D

(Support, Attention, Validation, Expression, Discharge.
Antidote to insanity 1988)

Help me
Break free
Must see
Real me.
Distress drags
Powerlessness sags
Voice tone
Means fear 'alone'
Thinking clogged
Action bogged



Dear friend
Ear lend
Hand touch
(Don't clutch)
Praise me
Raise me
Clear my doubts
Point out
The opening
flower of my
power!

Baha'i Quote:

The Great Being saith: The heaven of divine wisdom is illumined with the two luminaries of consultation and compassion. Take ye counsel together in all matters, inasmuch as consultation is the lamp of guidance which leadeth the way and is the bestower of understanding.

– Baha'u'llah

SEVEN YEAR ITCH

(15/07/1998)

You know you are getting old when,
you do more remembering than planning,
but can't remember breakfast!

When most journeys bring
more flashbacks than discoveries.
When shop assistants call you 'dear,'
then keep you waiting.
When tradesmen presume
your job will not be urgent,
and suspect you can't afford their time
(And never ring back).
When you could do every job advertised
but nobody wants you to.
When doctors write prescriptions
without really hearing you out.
Making knowing noises whilst writing,
closing with a dismissive nod.
When comfort is more important
than making a difference or having a say.
(Especially on a cold night),
and sleeping in your own bed matters
more than the testosterone status
of the partner sharing it with you.

There are many other clues too.
like it being a long time since anyone said,

‘You can't be old enough to have grandchildren.’
But it really comes home to roost,
when you go to visit your old primary school
and find a brass memorial plaque...
marking the spot where it used to be.

Also, the house where I was born, in Southport,
that had stood in the main street all these years.
Poised to become a poet's place of historic
pilgrimage,
became a carpark overnight- last year.

Have I reached another milestone?
Classed as a ‘veteran’ Stand-Up Poet?
David Hallett made the discovery,
I was not only ‘long-standing’, ‘original’,
‘regular.’
And once upon a ‘stand-up’, even ‘prolific’,
but it seems I might even be ‘inaugural’.
Having been here on that first night
7 years ago. So...

I welcome it. ‘Poetic Elder’.
No inferred ‘better’ of course.
After all, I never have won one of those ghastly
slams.

(This might be a good time to shock you by
admitting to an occasional ‘F’ word, and
assuring you, I have had a few orgasms too).

Sex and the four-lettered curse,
are of limited inspiration to my verse,
and drugs are not the way.
I've stifled pain or sought to play.
I am one who clings to rhyme,
and keeps my meter all in time.
Not the stuff of loud applause,
or out the back, bar catcalls.

Indeed, silence says I have been heard,
the room's resounding to my words,
then (unless you're asleep and bored)
I know that I have touched a chord.
And that is what I love to do,
as well as have you laughing too,
for all those precious times. Thank you.

I thank you with all my heart for 7 years of
listening to a 'wrinkly',
a fat, and female one at that.
I thank you for sometimes understanding,
or at least tolerating,
and for often caring and respecting.

I especially appreciate the talent, the
perspectives, the beauty and the scepticism,
the questioning and the insight, the stories
and experiences; the characters and the feelings,
enjoyed that enriched my life,
here through your poetry.

There have been seasons in my poetic
production.

Starting as a child with a mass of material that
went up in flames with our home
when I was 16.

This led to complete abstinence for years.

Divorce from a 25-year marriage,
parenting of 5 daughters, leading to the
discovery of feminism,
the truth behind our 'education',
and some political realities.

Result.

Liberation and explosive output.

This had simmered down to a trickle when
David Hallett sent out the call, to come out of
the 'closet' and on to our feet.

To 'Stand-up' for ourselves and for our craft,
in this land where poetry was traditionally the
stuff of humorous ridicule or bush storytelling.
To announce yourself as a poet in Australia,
took the courage to face embarrassment and/or
embarrassing reaction.

You are a what?

David Hallett, we salute you.

A brave, persistent man; a visionary and a poet
and entrepreneur extraordinaire.

Thank you indeed, and long may you
'Stand-up'.

I hope it is many years yet before a 'memorial
plaque' becomes the only sign that poets were
here, and that we have a long way to go as
'Live Poets'.

We do all know, don't we, that fame usually
comes only to 'The Dead Poets Society'.

And fortune?

Not likely, starving in garrets is still the go for
all artists,
be they painters or punctuators and posthumous
rewards are rarely financial.

In an ideal world...

POETS NOT POLITICIANS WOULD
PROSPER.

For now.

Don't give up the day job.

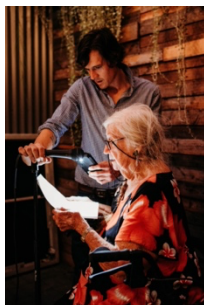
And guess who amongst the venerable
wordsmith's here tonight (another 18 years later)
is winning the race to posthumous fame ...

That would be ME!

But meantime.

See you next year.

JL.



Poets across the
generations at
David Hallett's
Lismore Live Poets

SIZING UP

(1990)

‘Little Lady. I love you.’
‘MY baby, MY pretty, MY sweet.’
‘Rest your dear, fluffy head on my shoulder
and I will swing you off your feet.’
‘An over the threshold carry
is the girl I dream I will marry.’
‘She will garnish my manhood, complete.’

This Big Daddy line,
so familiar in song and rhyme
may make for great soap operas,
but in the wash-up, is not a good sign

Awake Sleeping Beauty, and run
Run, as fast as you can.
You can!
His dream, could be your worst nightmare,
with this, ‘ever after’ man.

You won’t survive the hidden agenda
disguised within his plan.
I mean, where oh where can he be?
The ‘dear, sweet little fellow’
can love a big strong woman like me?



SOMETHING VERY SPECIAL

(To Ayaki Tainaka September 2005
– One of Judith's delightful Japanese homestay students)

Hold this little silver platypus
sacredly in your hand.
Let it be your Australian totem,
your loving protector from this land.

When you stroke her silken back.
remember...
and you will forever be
a part of Australia's story.
A precious shining moment
in God's miraculous eternity.
Like the unique and lovely platypus,
you are a shy but brave survivor,
and also deeply loved by me.



SORRY AGAIN AND FOREVER

(August 2016 – as brutality to Aboriginal Children in detention
screams out worldwide in the media)

‘Sorry’ we said, crossing bridges together,
our T-shirts... ‘Reconciliation’ they said,
with clasped hands black and white painted
by Bundjalung Elder.
In black, yellow, red.

Did they believe it?
Did they trust that ‘we’
the promise of justice and equality?

Did we mean it?
Or was it all ‘whitewash’ again,
disguising, denying oppression and pain;
our invasion and theft and greedy gain?

When did the ‘New Beginning’ begin?
Was it just another white political spin?

My aboriginal sisters say to me
‘guilty’ is not what you ought to be.
Sorry again my blackfella kin
my sisters and colleagues of first people’s skin.
I am a Don Dale gaoler... They work for me.
White man’s government is their authority.
Their place in power I elected, support,
So I am guilty of the atrocities they wrought.

I will say a guilt-stained 'sorry'
till my growing close, dying day.
Even my eighty plus lifetime claim,
much longer than beloved 'Aunty' peers,
haunts me with survivor shame and tears.

I pray forgiveness and commit to strive
to see some truth and justice arrive
In this Reconciliation Constitutional game.

And see First Peoples proudly stand
In their culture, history and Rights to this land.



THE NEXT WAVE

(On boxing- day tsunami 2004)

Waves of recreation. Heaven's clear blue seas.
offer bounteous fishing and luxurious holiday
ease. Buzz of the commerce of leisure, of booze
and fun in the sun, total freedom from worry,
or the haste of survival's run.
Why would anyone fear, the next sparkling wave
to come?
Man's wisdom and knowledge. How great can it
be, if the next move of our "mother", we never
foresee?

Wave of destruction...Takes it all away,
turning heaven into hell on that black Boxing
Day.
Wave of shock and disbelief.
Wave of helplessness and grief.
Then compassion and reaction...
Give give give...
We are reaching out. Help is coming....
Live live live.
Wave of reflection and deep deep questions?
Wave of reconstruction and painful resurrections
Wave of realization. count the human pain
Can money and materials really put it back
again?

In Persia, Baha'u'llah, when he was just a youth

announced to the world, a deep reflective truth
when seeing the entertainment of a cousin's
wedding night
being packed up in a box and stored out of
sight...

*“Erelong these outward trappings... heaped up
treasures... earthly vanities.
amassed battalions. gorgeous finery, these
proud and overweening souls.
all shall pass into the confines of the grave, as
though in that box.”*

One million landmines, in Aceh, they said
like rotten petals floated round the dead.
Orphaned children go looking for mothers
and must risk the gross appetites of others.
Are we re-living Sodom and Gomorrah?
Is this “natural disaster” a meaningful horror?
Is this the wave we had to have
“To plant in the garden of our hearts
naught but the rose of love,”
as Baha’u’llah told us we must do.
For One World Family to come true.
Where are the lines on the map,
can keep a Tsunami back?
Which colour is the skin,
can keep the life-force in?
How much gold can protect from death’s cold?

Many miracles now unfold,

from those who have survived.
“Immerse yourself in the ocean of my words,”
by Baha’u’llah we were told.
And in devastated Sri Lanka,
a little group obeyed,
and were saved in that higher place,
as they studied together and prayed.

Worldwide, at this moment, it would seem to be
not one Bahá’í has died,
in that awful Tsunami.
We are still here, and making waves,
for a confused humanity...
Waves of His Word.
Waves of His Love,
and if you open your heart,
you will see the big one rise up from the
ruins.....

His Irresistible Unity.

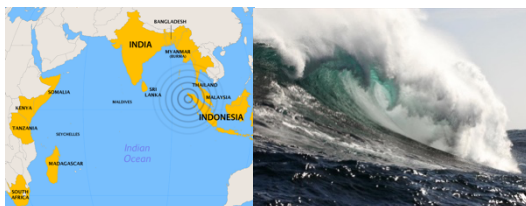
Baha’i Quote:

World peace is not only possible but inevitable. It
is - the next stage in the evolution of this planet - in the
words of one great thinker, 'the planetization of mankind.' -

-Baha’u’llah

Become as the waves of one ocean, the drops of
one sea, the flowers of one rose-garden, the trees of one
orchard, the grains of one harvest and the plants of one
meadow.

– Abdu'l-Baha



REGRETS

(‘Regrets. I’ve had a few’. In the land of Gonnado
Judith Light ... New Year 2018)

An Octogenarian is one who has lived long in
the land of Gonnado,
Wrestling with Cando, Shouldo, Oughtado,
Mustdo;
that nervous shy Wannado; and that sulky Can’t
and Won’t.
She Is now dealt the Joker...
Nevergonnado instead
as the Red Queen threatens her head.
Like Alice in Wonderland, she wakes to
understand.
Ego’s dreams, hopes, and plans;
clever schemes and scams;
were ‘Muchado About Nothing’ in Shakespeare-
say.
What to do...? She knows.
The only way out is through!

Next stop gotta be Neverland.
Will Wanna-know here find peace?
Could the spirits dreamtime expectation,
at last come true?
Or... will that be a black hole in space.
Just a rabbit hole too?

Earth’s rabbit hole was some journey!
Not quite over yet but,

I've sipped from the bottle saying 'bigger,' and
glimpsed eternity.

Gonna love, thank, and Bless all, who shared
their precious Time.

In the struggle, growth, laughter, respect, tears,
and love with me,
and were part of life's rigorous testing, that set
my ego free.

And I wholeheartedly forgive,
all the ones made it tough.

Like Alice safe home with her family,
I am proud to find that enough.

Warning...

2018 is the Chinese Year of the Dog...

I am a Chinese Wood Dog

(Loyal, trustworthy, tenacious,
sometimes hard to escape)

This is my year at last... so...watch this space
Surprises, fireworks, action could finally take
place for me...

Oughtabe a big bang...
well...

Let's just wait and see.



STAY DOWN GIRL, DOWN!

(Compliments to 'Women Who Run with Wolves'
Clarissa Pinkola Este -1998)

‘Con los ojos vendados.’

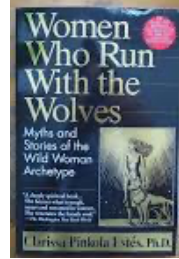
(There are blindfolds on my feet).

From New Mexico, Navajo woman cries

‘Lost to the roots of my spirit am I
and lost to earth’s rhythmic beat’.

She speaks direct to my soles.

Into my cramped aching toes,
understanding flows.



Whether they bind or constrain us,
with leather or cotton windings.

Or ridicule and belittling words
are our ultimate bindings,
still, we are tethered,
our power vetoed.



Every ‘witch’ and ‘goddesses’ knows
woman draws through her feet from the earth the
strength and magic to give a childbirth, and
nurturing love upward flows and intuition,
tingles her toes.

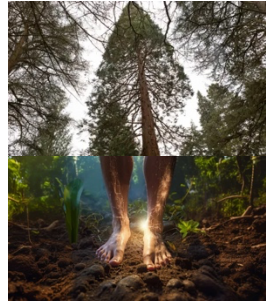


There was the farce,
of Cinderella’s feet under glass!
Hans Anderson’s mermaid tortured me,
surrendering her tail for the love of a male and
walking in earthbound agony and to return her
love. He had no ability.

(This tale is true... it was done to me too.)

I have walked under Navajo skies
at night through forest Redwoods
with bare feet as my eyes.
My Indian guide said to me
‘Tread with feeling and in silence
and let your feet see.’

At first all I knew was fright,
totally blinded my pedestrian sight,
till slowly they found inner light.



Back on civilization's bitumen
searching for comfort's shoes,
immune to blisters corns and bunions
fashion's merciless decree offered platforms,
stilettos and pointed toes to put calves and feet
under sensual stress, effectively cutting us off at
the knees.



When I was a child, my mother would pray
for shoes on every child some-day.
Polished leather laced up tight.
Not for warmth and safety, it seemed to be,
but keeping those dirty bare feet out of sight.
All about discipline and respectability.
I puzzled at the social disgust.
At a foot unshod and moral must.
To hide away such useful friend.
And point with shame at leg's proud end.



Shoes protect they say.

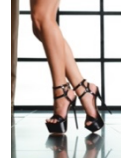
Keep stone, thorn and mud away.

Visiting Uluru and the Central heart,
of this land I saw Aboriginals tread
with bare feet swiftly and lightly
over what lay ahead.



Ladies toes must have polished nails,
be decorative, clean, and discreet.

They should, like all our hardworking parts,
be tempting toys for our male counterparts.
History reveals a time in Japan when
painfully bound toes made a snug place,
in women's bound feet for the copulation of
men.



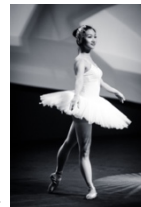
And these bound women
could barely totter away.

The last discovery in the history of women's
foothold came in L.A.

When I met a premier ballerina theatre bound,
(operating that is) for her 6th procedure she said,
'This is normal for professional
dancers like me.'



Young and at the peak of her career.
It was about to end was her greatest fear.
The fantasy world of women in flight
And on and on... And on...



VOICE OF THE SOUL

(2009)

Head back, eyes raised is the laugh
of relief from danger now past,
or freedom from searing pain at last.

There is the snigger that echoes glee.
It was her, it happened to. Not me,
rings out her delight at another's plight.

They say witches cackle.
I've heard a few.
Mostly as an old hag,
puts one over the new.



Embarrassment giggles
as shame or fear niggles.
The impelling sneer of evil intent,
is always on winning and belittling bent.

There is the titter of coy,
as girl flirts with boy.
And the deep fruity chuckle
of wickedness shared,
sexual innuendo dared.

The most uplifting sound I've heard
is my love, on hearing and enjoying my words?

Making him smile and laugh out loud
is the warm sun dispelling the clouds.
It is like the dawn-chorus greeting new
day when his heart and soul uplift in play.

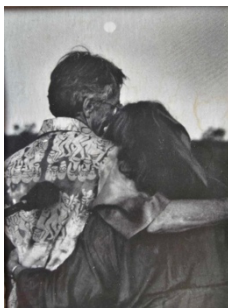
Respite from worry, freedom from care,
is the laughter that we truly share.
That's an intimacy, beyond compare.
At such a warm hearth love lives long
cradled by laughter's joyous song.

In other words, let me say.
People who laugh together.
'Together' will probably stay.

Baha'i Quote:

My home is the home of peace. My home is the home of joy and
delight. My home is the home of laughter and exultation.
Whoever enters through the portals of this home must go out with
gladsome heart.

-Abdu'l-Bahá



THE LITTLE FIVE-OH

(1994)

So... you are Fifty...!
What does that say to me?
Some around you, I can tell,
think you've reached
the date from hell...

Time to lay you down and die.
From park side bench,
watch passers-by.

I once wrote a verse for a lady
celebrating a feisty eighty.
She hadn't gone insane.
Wasn't even in slow lane.
When I reached her door,
by mistake for her party,
the week before.
She laughingly asked,
'What's your age?'
'Oh... sixty... I recall that stage.
I did those things then, dear.
You'll get over it... Never fear!'

So.
Fifty is not a sign
from traffic control divine,
restricting you too 'slow'.

As the speed you now must go.

Why?

It's not even much of a score,

when focusing on a century or more.

You just turned a page, in a lovely book,

or found a piece of puzzle,

with a different fit or look.

I promise you...

like teenage pimples,

putting your eyes in frames,

discovering rolling dimples,

latest health fads and medical claims.

(Next year's problems and pesky pains
even latest science and electronic games.)

The day you knew success

the next life seemed a mess,

finding great fun was all about

and that you had been missing out,

wondering if life was just a joke

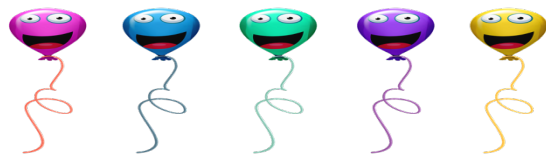
to entertain the 'Big Bloke?'

You will someday find

'Old' and 'Young' are a farce

and like all the rest...

they too will pass!



Big 50: Congratulations, you're halfway there...
and the best is yet to come...

WHOSE COUNTING

(1992)

Ages don't count pages.
The race is not just run
by the time it takes to travel
or the distance that's been done.

Don't tell me I'm in midlife
when I've just begun the race.
Don't flag me on a finish line
measured by your pace.

Keep your yearly tally
for the watchers of the clock.
My eyes are set on distance
and my feet aren't taking stock.

The distance I can travel
I will mark, without the years
and stack up golden trophies
of love and joy, not fears.

My speedo is within me.
My heart clock tolls the day
when I must slow my travel
and surrender to the grey.

STATE OF ORIGIN

(1992)

Blue and Red the papers said
The flags that they were flying
A ball, territory for which
They desperately were vying
State of Origin, the war
They try to call it play
And the critical, the final score
Three/ four and reds (win) the day
Still the galleries, fevered call
See gladiators rise and fall
Mighty things in silken shorts
Locked in bloodletting contact sports
Bodies pushed in sweat and pain
Collide, writhe, and rise up again
The ball centre of the strife
The need to win, the aim in life
The crowd with alcohol aflame
Calls heroes' names and promised fame
But victories day fast fades away
And we'll read another score
Totted up not today
But in 20 years or more
Foreshadowed in the finer print
Of injuries galore
Figures all glossed over
Censored from the game
That every battered member
Will have to tote again

In limps and scars and arthritis
In muscles taut with pain
And a weary worn-out brain
Then they might reflect with mates
In footnote to the story
The Origin of their States
The ultimate cost of their score and glory.



THE GODDESS HAS CLAY FEET

(For my beloved daughter.
Robyn on her fortieth birthday.)

At one with sun, sea, and sand.
A Goddess treads, to the heartbeat of the land.
Carries your precious soul, in the palm of her
hand.
In my womb. Creation lives.
The planet circulates. Pulses through my feet.
Spiritual vision lights my eyes to the ultimate
depth of eternal skies.
You and I meet.
From madness you set me free
from the insanity that was,
the alone, the pointless.
Me,
driven by nonsense needs on the owner- ship of
material greed's,
and petty, petty worries, that the daily treadmill
feeds.
Universe without. Universe within.
How could they ever call such sacredness,
original sin?
And oh, how can I get it right.
Bringing you into the world,
showing you the light;
bring brilliant dawn to your day.
Point to your best way?

Dear God help me I pray, how I pray.

Lost is the Goddess to 'just a mother'
struggling through her harshest day.
And I sighed, and I cried, and oh how I tried,
and 'they' made it so hard,
took so much away.
Made the miracle, more war than play,
that not floating on Goddess feet
we had to do in blood and sweat!

Thank you for that Goddess moment,
though I was not then, and I am not yet.
It was our pinnacle, our bonding secret.
The birth of a Mother.
A love beyond any other.
If I ever did right, if you only knew
it was the day that I gave life to you.
Sorry I fell from that place, that pedestal of
amazing grace. Failed so often, many days, in
oh-so-many-many ways.
Would I, could I, restore insight to your own
magnificent spiritual height?
Set you fully alive and free, from the
inadequacies you learnt from me.
from the harm I did, the magic I took away
walking over you, with my dreadful feet of clay.



This painting hangs
above my bed. It was
given to me by my 1st
born daughter Robyn.
It symbolises our
angelic group.

SAGITTARIUS PIG MEETS LIBRA DOG

(2009)

‘Missing’... It is a quivering ache,
a searching, a sense of emptiness
quite hard to take.

It’s a space inside
that awaits the tide
the coming in...
Arrival.
To make complete.
Inner peace and a soul replete.

Time is a hard road
When the ‘other’ is missing.
Eternity is a day
constantly focused
on the one that is ‘away’
It is heavy work this waiting
and an agony, this dating!

How can I ‘miss’
one who was never here
never touched, never felt,
never kissed, never smelt?

It is a longing for more.
a vacant space, an open door.

Do you have the key

to open the barrier
between you and me
perhaps create we?

Can two become one;
side by side, hands linked
before the rising moon
and the setting sun?

Shall we brave the waves,
plunge in for the ride.
crest a life much lived,
daring height of full tide?

Can we come 'home'
on laughter and fun
and be loving partners
to the end of the run?

Guess we'd never know if we never tried,
to give it a go. this poetic ride.
So, you and me,
should we go inside?



Footnote:

Married 4 times...
But this is the one that got away...
Sorry Arthur Stone...
It wasn't meant to be...

WHEN THE CHIPS ARE DOWN

(1997)

I am Ogg.
The supercomputer.
Cry.
'Holy holy,' and on bended knee bring sacrifices
from the tree.
Lay them out in front of me.
Marvel, oh ye peasants,
at what silicone can be.

Work and worry now are past.
For you I offer peace at last.
As a screen-filled future annihilates the past.
Turn off those neurons you'll no longer need
(Some day, I too, will go that speed)
This is electronic day.
I'll do the thinking.
You just pay.
Gobble up the 'latest'
and you will be the greatest.
I'll do it all.
Store and recall and 'trust me',
I'm your memory.
Forget books.
They have no looks
We have passed the stage of words on a page.

You say you want some fun,
I've enough for everyone.

No need for families now.
We have terminators. Wow!
No need for kids to climb and run
just make the digits, jump the gun.
No need for elders shuffling round
(they're ready to go, in the ground).

It's all just gossip what they say
that we radiate your strength away.
We are the light of true progress
You couldn't aspire to anything less.
Why this is the second-coming day
and C.D. ROM is on the way.

I have you tightly in my 'net'
and the sky's the limit you can get.
Oh it might not be true blue.
But a plaster ceiling is better for you.

Hey, watch that guy heading for the door.
What does he want that switch thing for?
He's questioning what life's about?
My Terminal.

He's pulled me

Oooooouut



WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT

(Samoa visit Nov. 1995)

My first love, at twenty-one
was a Scot called - Robert Patterson.
I, at nursing sought a degree
and he studied at our university.
Brisbane, Queensland,
neath Australian sun was where our young love
had begun.
But it ended, with a strange goodbye.
a mysterious sounding word, 'Baha'i'
He had decided not to wed
committing to Baha'u'llah's plan instead.
To Western Samoa he would go.
Travel Teaching, to help the Faith grow.



Some 30 yrs. Later on.
I had daughters five - my husband gone.
Again, like mysterious echo I heard
that impelling, that fateful word!
A man had reason to ask if I
was, by any chance, a 'Baha'i'?
A dormant seed in my head
burst into life as by water fed.

A cautious story I then told
of a Bob Patterson I had known of old.
He produced a thick yearbook
On that long-lost face, I wept to look.
Robert had gone to the Abha Life.

leaving a Samoan family, and wife.
I felt a hand reach out to me
and a Baha'i in truth I began to be.
There were searching for questions
and books to read
before I could 'declare', indeed.
But the outcome was never in doubt
once that old seed had broken out.
Now in Samoa I came to pray
at the grave of the man who pointed the way.
I remember the depth of his laughing eyes.
You knew him too, your Samoan sky.
A pilgrimage it has ended for me
in this sacred heart, of the Pacific Sea.

Baha'i Quote:

In the East the light of His Revelation hath broken; in the West
have appeared the signs of His dominion. Ponder this in your hearts,

O people, and be not of those who have turned a deaf ear to the
admonitions of Him Who is the Almighty, the All-Praised.... Should
they attempt to conceal its light on the continent, it will assuredly
rear its head in the midmost heart of the ocean, and, raising its voice,
proclaim: 'I am the life-giver of the world!'

-Bahá'u'lláh

Malietoa Tanumafili II was a Bahá'í. He was the second royal
(after Queen Marie of Romania) to join the Faith. The House of
Worship in Tiapapata, eight kilometres from the country's capital of
Apia, was dedicated by him in 1984. As the first reigning sovereign
to accept the Message of Baha'u'llah.

Footnote: Robert Patterson was instrumental in the introduction of
the Baha'i Faith to Samoa.



WHO'S IN A NAME

(1995)

'Don't Russians love their children too?'

It was a pop hit song,
and lo the cold war crumbled.
And it didn't take too long.

Humanise the enemy, in the sites of gun,
'gooks' 'wogs' and 'dirty rats' rapidly become,
animated flesh and blood.

A beating heart, 'someone'.
Not just 'objective' target for
ignorant hater's fun.

Hitler had to mock-up film.
Most incredible of porn.
That jews were teeming vermin,
in filthy rat holes born.
To build the 'right' class attitude,
of laughter, fear and scorn.

'Sticks and stones may break my bones.'
My mother always said.
My word, she got it wrong though,
when 'names will never hurt me.'
Was the second line she read.

They label you, oh mother dear,
so they can cancel you as peer.
Before they shoot you dead.

Reforming of our language.
Laws on words that vilify.
Make red necks laugh out loud,
but thank God, some of us try.
What we eat and drink today,
walks and talks at morn, it's true.
But more importantly, what we say is recipe for
what, next day. We all get up and do.
And 'they' is the most cunning name.
It protects 'us'...
Me and you!

Baha'i Quote:

I charge you all that each one of you concentrate all the thoughts of your heart on love and unity. When a thought of war comes, oppose it by a stronger thought of peace. A thought of hatred must be destroyed by a more powerful thought of love. Thoughts of war bring destruction to all harmony, well-being, restfulness and content.

-Abdu'l-Bahá

WISHING ON THE MOON

(1982)

Life's great.... but...

I wish when the full moon floats 'cross the sky.
there was someone there to share my sigh.

I love life. But...

If only, when I'm irritated
someone could hear, and my thinking could be
validated.

Magnificent world... But oh for an intimate,
who could know my worst and still think me
great.

Living is a joy. But please can there be
one to share the laughs
and sing and dance with me.

Life can be easy ... But. When it's rough.
One to lean on.
That needs me too,
would be enough.

Ah... if all this could be.
We'd be really in love.
This one and me.



(Footnote: A wish that came true when I married David Alexander in 1992.
So don't give up hope anyone... Miracles happen.)

YOUTH'S RIGHT TO DIE

(First statistics pointed to young men dying; updated when young women started to catch up in the race to self-destruction in a packet 1985) [Updated 2000]

A small news report whispered one day
next a colour page, ad of smokers at play.
'Teenagers, one in four, who start to smoke, will
die from the effect of cigarettes, they were
conned to buy.'

But silver screen heroes and pin-up queens act
out glamorous fun and tempt all teens.
Tough and sexy, they can rate.

Hero Paul Hogan calls the battle won
with 'Any'ow, Just have one mate!'
Wimps and Wowsers. Go away.
There's a lifetime yet, before you have to pay!
Tough guy Yul Brynner, as he died
with his very last breath desperately cried
'Just don't smoke.'
It was dubbed obscene.
Immediately banned from silver screen.
Obscene it was!
Big Tobacco's might!
To censor truthful, advertising
from the public's sight.
They bury their victims and their deadly plight.
Our 'God' of science, years ago claimed 'no
proof' could see...

Smoking was dangerous.
Well not CONCLUSIVELY.
But in hospitals emphysemic men appeared
exclusively and nurses knew that nasty cough as
a male propensity.

World War Two – That was the time of tobacco
give aways
Not the way we use that term, in these latter
days.
But to everyone who went to war,
like currency in packets most generous of
rackets.
Women started smoking, as they had never done
before...
Glorious equality.
The big boy's benefit's we girls yearned for.

NOW many years along the way
emphysemic women every day, knock on every
doctor's door,
with the 'Old Man's Disease'.
Not quite what they hoped for!
Smoking is a suspect in women's cancer boom
and in the health of babies, who copped smoke
in the womb.
But giving up, for women they fear will make
them fat.
Women's face book image cannot handle that.

Decorated fingers play sophistication's toys.

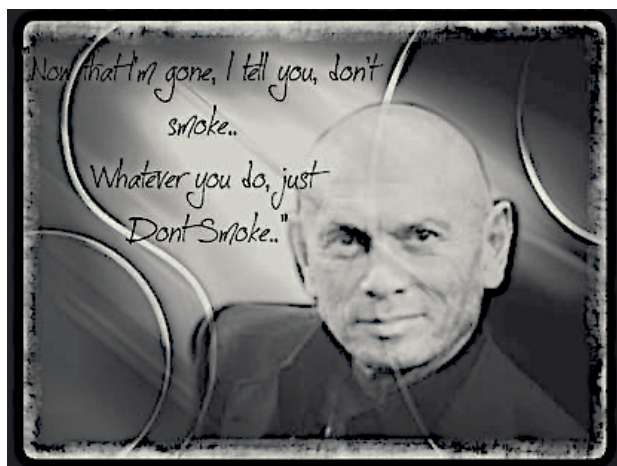
Cigarettes and alcohol help the nervous flirt with
boys.

Once was men but now it's all, even younger
now they fall.

Enslaved to a tube that sucks the life out of
them.

Drains a river of gold.

To the Big Tobacco men.



WOMAN ALONE

They said, 'You are pale. Set next to a male.'
They deceived. But she believed. Nurse, wife,
mother, cook. Left no time to look.
Past caring for others (the bondage of mothers).
Or question the king hats, worn by the brothers.
She never knew beauty or significance in self,
left, so long, upon the shelf. But now, THE time
has come. Little self-sneaking out. Even having
fun. Gazing at the view and watching nature do.
Wonder, power, and joy, now throb in this one,
'not-a-boy'. Life-love, and zest and a realization
that, now comes the best.
'Welcome', the greying age.
'Welcome', time of the sage.
Now I DO know. Now I CAN grow.
Now, I will happily go with the flow.

The story of a real life wonder woman

Goonellabah's Judith Light (pictured in her younger years) is a mother, a grandmother, a great grandmother, a widow, a divorcee, a choir co-ordinator, a reconciliation pioneer, a nurse, a beautician, a scripture teacher, a landlady and a poet. In fact if you spend a half hour talking to Judith, you might feel a little puffed, as her seemingly endless energy belies her 73 years.

Judith is one of many 'living books' at the Lismore Living Library's monthly sessions. The concept involves 'borrowing' one of several 'books' for a conversation, with the aim being to break down barriers and challenge stereotypes.

"I've had a very varied life and I'm a bit of a survivor - my original book title was *A Light Still Shining in the Seventies*. I like to think I'm showing people that being an old lady is not such a bad thing.



That old ladies like me are the wise women of our community and we have lots of life experience that's valuable," said Judith. "What's really fascinating about being a living book is that you find yourself revealing things you'd almost forgotten yourself. Recently a friend 'borrowed' me and we both discovered a world of things we didn't know about each

other. Being a living book somehow gives you permission to go into the deeper stuff of life. It's a very bonding experience."

Judith's new book title is *Verse and Worse* - a "bit of a warning there may be poetry involved," says Judith. She believes the Living Library is a great way to promote trust and tolerance between virtual strangers. "It helps people

realise we're all connected," said Judith. "If we're ever going to have peace on earth or within ourselves that's the essence of it. To recognise that despite our differences, we are all part of one human family."

Lismore's Living Library was modelled on a European concept and was the first of its kind in Australia. It has had enormous success since its launch last November and has been the catalyst for projects springing up around the nation, with living libraries opening in every state except Tasmania.

The next Living Library session is on Friday, January 6, at the Lismore City Library from 11am to 2pm. Anyone is welcome. For more information phone the library on 6621 2464.

THE PROVERBIAL

(1995)

‘Look before you leap’, she’d say.
‘Hesitate – you’re lost’!
Proverbial wisdom for each day,
my mother proudly tossed.
‘Seeing is believing’ was another they told her.
and ‘Things are not quite what they seem.’
and ‘Beauty is with the beholder.’
But ‘What you see is what you get.’
Oh yeah. I haven’t found that yet!

If ‘Deeds do count for than words.’
So what of ‘pen ship versus swords?’
And ‘Roses, sweetness always claim,
regardless of their given name.’
Remember... ‘Pride precedes a fall.’
and ‘Pots and kettles holler black.’
and ‘Cheats they never prosper?’
(Well I’ve met some with a stack!)

How could I ever question
such great wisdom? – Never dare!
But I must admit, I never fit the
‘Cap I had to wear.’
I was puzzled. ‘Whistling woman
must be scorned with crowing hen.’
But come to think of it... It was
‘The clothes that made the men!’

One I used to ponder, and Mother played real
loose, was the one about
‘The gander sauced the same way as the goose.’
I saw my lucky brother, served with fault
covering eye. His mischiefs were endearing, and
I never could see why.
On me, it seemed, a chilly sauce, was hotly
roughly heaped. I guess my mum would
remonstrate, ‘I sewed it, to be reaped.’

Well mother dear, you did your best,
I know, at heart, to span.
The ‘Time and tide that pulled at us,
whilst waiting for no man.’
My problem was confusion.
One day the words would fit.
But the bubble burst,
and I feared the worst,
when you preached the opposite!
Oh... what the hell,
‘All endeth well.’
And if proverbs were a nonsense
they made life rich not just a ‘Bitch’
and taught poetic license.
‘Deeds not words.’ Have seen me through.
And that I learnt from watching you!



Judith with her
awesome mother
Alice Francesca
Ruth Kempson
(always called
Ruth) dining at
CenterPoint
Tower in Sydney

PROGRESS

(2021)

‘What a Pandemic of confrontations.’

‘What a madness of progress.’

Pandemic of neuro,

biological and political chaos.

And insanity of presidential elections

and civil wars all round.

My Mother always said,

‘You can’t stop progress.’

‘Why can’t we stop progress?’

‘What the HELL is progress?’

Who does it serve and why,

where did it start and how?

90 years on in my ‘progress’ and at last I see,

what a cruel joke of colonial justification, in

lineal time, to justify and disguise

greed’s theft, rape and murder.

There is no peace, no reconciliation in the stolen

and pillaged lands of colonisation. Until we not

only stop progress, but reverse its devil-march,

its cannibalism, its merciless hunger, and greed.

Footnote:

Indigenous time is not lineal.

But is cyclical, seasonal, interactive, climatic,
wholistic, spiritual, progress of unity.

STRIKING A SNAG

There once was a
self-proclaimed “S.N.A.G.”
editing a poetry mag.
He had a dream.
A testosterone scheme,
to **fix** up a curse.
that waffling... “chick verse”.
He’d cut from each line
the wastage of time,
in facts of no use,
words too abstruse,
and emotional detail,
so irritates the male.

Action he wants,
with minimal fonts.
More bang to the mile
makes any bloke smile.
All good old boys know
their get up and go
is stated at best
in manly B.S.

‘Waffling’ Footnote...

We know God put Adam in charge. **But** gave him a rib, awfully large. Embracing his heart and his breath whilst supporting him unto death. Master of all like a tree in Eden he stood almighty with a rib like a branch full of flowers, wafting sweet on the soft breeze for hours. Prune branch and blossoms away and the stump becomes sad dreary grey with no point in its strength and its powers. It seems to me... abstruse though this be that when editing others poetry we should see both the wood and the tree. Editorial screening could gain so much from a gentler waffling, woman’s touch!

YANKAPHOBIA

(1999)

I remember the American phobia of my parents and most of the
Australian populace during the 2nd World War.
Apart from being "overpaid; oversexed and over-here" and being
served in queues before "our boys". They also stirred their tea the
wrong way, leaned on tables when eating and once my mother saw
two "yanks" eating ice-cream with steak. she never recovered! By
the way. It is a great taste. Vanilla ice-cream on steak.
Here's to One World. the sooner the better... All world Citizens. One
family, no matter which patch on earth you come from.

Oversexed, overpaid and, to our despair,
coming in boatloads, from over there...
And now, they were in great hoards, over here!

"Shop girls are the worst," my mother cursed.
"Flirting and flaunting and serving Yanks first,
whilst ignored and shy,
Our Boys are left standing by!"

"Mark my words, you girls beware...
If you dare to wed, and go over there,
You'll find these charming upstart lads,
are ill-bred uncouth cads.
Why, they can't even use cutlery right
so crude stirring tea, and with fork and knife."

And horror of horrors, at the Shingle Inn
I've seen them create unforgivable sin.

Two Yanks dining out on best T-bone steak
with vanilla ice cream on top of the plate!
Now how can you trust any man
who eats like that, and says,
“Thank you, Ma’am.”
And the final proof, if you needed more
is that chewing gum stuff
always stuck in their jaw!

But...

It was the endless Hollywood movie story
and the Newsreel’s propaganda roar,
claiming, with fanfare and flag waving glory
only Yanks were fighting,
and winning, the war!

That,
indeed,
they were hated for!



THE LEGEND OF THEY IN PROPAGANDA SWAY

‘Propaganda’ dictionary say is loaded language
to produce emotional rather than rational
response.

Once upon a time there was an old woman a
mother of mine indeed.

When I asked her about injustice,

Man’s cruelty to man

Persecution and exploitation in travail

Of both female and male

Her ‘fairy-tale’ assurance to me, was ‘my dear
they would never let that be!’

‘Not God.’ The one omnipotent bountiful ‘He.’

Through life’s journey all grown up I worked it
out, I came to see.

She meant our leaders, the law makers, those
powerful men at the top!

Looking down history It sadly came to me, she
was fooled.

There was no such protection.

She never saw the gap between say and do.

There was no insurance, reward, or fair pay.

At the end of their, long, hard, weary day.

For their loyal obedient slavery offered up to
that legendary, ‘They.’

Mother never lied. But she always quoted
proverbially, like 'Cheats never prosper.'
They used to say, poetic licence her proof.
'What oft enough is repeated must be truth.'

Good and bad. Right and wrong.
Come to us in verse and song.
Prayerful enlightenment can show our path.
Language directing, inspiring our day.
But beware...
The voice of propaganda, always was, and still is
EVERYWHERE!
To exploit our inner greed, dressing it up as real
need, even gallant courageous deed!
To answer wars call, to deeds that feed
our ego's greed. Indeed.
The evil whisper of vested interests,
of money's powerplay...
Gobbles up our work, our nights, and days.
Steals our soul,
twists our goal.
Our wish to win, to save the day.
To see our life path 'Satan's' way.

Propaganda I see you now!
In language, print, film, and tale.
In personal and international sale.
Coming from seeming good and wise,
in everything you advertise.
In government laws. In politics cause.

(There once was a 'law', truth in advertising.
Anyone here old enough to recall, that
commitment by all?)

You have lied to me and mine.
Generations past and now online.
Propaganda baits the hook.
Who is fishing? Making the catch?
That's the 'They' of today.
AI sneaking in, disguising sin,
overtaking conscience with derisive grin.
Embracing the sucker, the fool within...

90 years old now,
I look a long way back.
Through childhood's war time nightmares of
'yellow peril', the Japs were coming to torture
and kill me- personally.
Resolved as innocent lovely lads from university
being homestay mothered by me.
Ironically questioning,
'What war could have ever threatened me?'
All that identification of a
less than human enemy.
The hate and fear and glorification of the
courage and skill it took to kill.
And now I see your dirty track,
too late to cleanse my moral slate.

What can I say to St Peter at the golden gate?

Just a humble... 'Sorry mate.'
I couldn't see the propaganda that influence and
courted me, and so I fear the truth could be...

Maybe I wanted it to be true.
The fight for truth is hard to do.
To go against the mob, the normal, the
'everyone' everyone wants to be.
Propaganda ace in its pack of lies and illusion,
leads to terminal confusion.

Was I a good mother? Raising my 5 girls??
Today's propaganda say's 'a mother's place is in
the wrong.' Ridicule her mother say. 'Don't
drink or smoke or eat that way. Don't give your
precious body away.'
Fun spoiler they say – Wowzer.
What would she know anyway.
Take that nanny s*** away.
Mum the war against their salesmanship.
Their propaganda.
I'm losing it.

When George Washington was six years old, he
received a hatchet as a gift and damaged his father's
cherry tree with it. When his father discovered what
George had done, he became angry. Young George
bravely said, 'I cannot tell a lie...I did cut it with my
hatchet.' Washington's father embraced him and
declared that his son's honesty was worth more than a
thousand trees. Footnote: Attention today's political
candidates.



Baha'i Quote:

Truthfulness is the foundation of all human virtues. Without truthfulness progress and
success, in all the worlds of God, are impossible for any soul. When this holy
attribute is established in man, all the divine qualities will also be acquired.

-Bahá'u'lláh

THE JAPS CAME TO LISMORE AT LAST

The Japs are COMING!

‘Coming any day!’

In my worst childhood nightmares,
that they were on their way.

Coming of course- for me.

Personally.

My 1st school (kindergarten years)

Humpybong, Redcliffe QLD.

I came straight from dairy farm innocent,
isolation from wars hell and fear.

So suddenly and gruesomely near.

Little schoolboys telling tale of legendary
horror, in blood curdling detail.

‘Japs everybody knows, cut off women’s breast
to fry up for BBQ feasts.’

‘Really?’

‘So they say.’

And these very devils are on their way.

And we’re also surrounded by German spies.

Mr Dabblestein one of our teachers, had just
been taken to jail. The house beside the school
where he had lived, hid in its veranda rails,
held cannons and telescopes and
all sorts of ways to surveil.

That poor gentle immigrant.

Now interred.

And these same boys in lunchtimes breaks had
us spying on his empty house.
Every day since they took him away.
And still the japs were on the way...

War long over, here in Lismore,
80 years approximately later...
The Japs arrived.
To a bedroom next to mine, in my home,
under university homestay.
And what sweeties and gentlemen
they proved to be.
So respectful, nice, and friendly to me.
They had no knowledge of Darwin bombing,
or of any threat Japan
had been to me, personally.
Or of propagandas place
in all our twisted histories.



The 'Japs' are
here.
In my very home.
In my very heart.



WAR DAMNED WAR

Anzac Day cometh!
Hooray Hooray!
War! Damned war.
What is it?
Who is it for?
Who wins?
(We are told that's when
Australia became a Nation?)

Went to the movies last week-
The 'Escapers' Michael Caine's last movie.
Glenda Jackson last role and dying performance.
Reflecting on commemoration / celebration of
the 'Allied' landings in France.
As 'The Great Wars' ended,
and Great Men died.

Two men of my life were part of it.
My uncle Bill won the Croix De Guerre for
being shot down in that very battle.
He was a solicitor and officer in the Royal
Australian air force (R.A.F) and a poet who
'Went' And his brother, (My father).
Too young and not fit enough.
Could not 'GO.'

The following two poems tell a little of their stories and something of mine.

Uncle Bill was the 'Bigger Man' who went.
My father, the 'Lesser Man' who stayed.

None of us escaped,
hero or civilian.



RESETTLEMENT 1919

By William Flower Kempson
(Uncle Bill to Judith Light)

‘Will you give them a stone?’
Who can give back the time that is gone?
Who can give back the days?
Before we answer to countries call
And left our separate ways
Was it in vain the labour?
The sacrifice?
Was it in vain?

Are they years that the locust have eaten?
The years when the dragon was slain?
They made us a joyous welcome with
Bunting and bean fests and bands.
Then they shut their eyes to our further needs
Their ears to our just demands.

It’s pleasant to see you safely back
It’s good that you were not killed
Your names on a roll of honour
But your place-well it had to be filled.

Only a bar of ribbon or a strip of golden braid
To mark the bigger man who went
from the smaller men who stayed

We dwelt with a fierce obsession on your gallant
deeds before

And We cheered when you passed in procession
Surely you don't want more?

Comforts you sent to the wounded
Honour, you yielded the dead
Now there's the living to deal with
And a problem to face instead

And the danger still was on you
Did you think the time to come
Would see Our Galant lads of the front
As the unemployed at home

Dead are the flowers you scattered
Cheers have been born away
And Yesterday's things that mattered
Are myths of the past today.

For you they fought and they laboured
For you they have paid the price
Are the years that the locust has eaten
The years of their sacrifice

Matthew 7.9-11

Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone. Or if he asks for fish, will he give him a snake?

THE ALIEN

(1995)

‘Dad was inadequate,’ my brother said,
angrily, from hairy male head,
looking so much like the man he deplored.
Yet anathema to the gentle father,
I had once adored.
Images, like lantern show,
flickering through my head,
prodded tearful flow, a heart's letting go,
at half-truths being said.

Dad never cried...that could not be...
certainly not in front of me!
Yet, at work, or play,
I saw him full of pain...every living day.
Sweat poured out in embarrassment and fear
every time emotion came, ever so dangerously,
near.

He kept himself safe distance, never to be shown
in eyes, blue and clear, a person never to be
known.
So often his voice would crack...
 quickly cleared. then back on track.
Often those eyes,
looked out, in question and surprise,
like a startled ‘how did I get here, and who are
you out there?’

And always leaving my question unanswered.
'Did he really care?'

Were you there for us? Not quite...
Always peripheral to our site,
but the toil of your hands... What you did.
Was always life's background for this kid.
Battered, freckled hands at that,
always ready with gentle pat,
reassuring in touch, I never have quite found
in other big male hands around.

Those hands caressed chess pieces with a
master's expertise.
Yet I knew they turned in secret to some glossy
bedroom sleaze,
when not rubbing Mum's weary feet
and knobbly arthritic knees.

They painted and drew,
strummed musical chords and nurtured and grew
a jungle of colour and green.
A famous garden to be seen.
Plants were his friends, with no tongue to attack
his deeply felt unfitness.
His painful lack of all the badges of 'Real Man,'
and his failure at the 'Do or die' plan.

Voices of wartime derision of his agricultural
decision to push a farmer's plough,
not wear gold insignia on his red brow,

to walk through furrows of mud,
rather than rivers of blood.

Called 'Pommie' and 'Cur' as his name,
at the height of their zest,
despite volunteer badge on lapel of his vest.
Sending dreaded white feather
and soul-destroying shame.

His brother gifted his childhood
with a title he much preferred...
Because of quite a big beak,
they always called him 'Bird.'
He sheltered it under an old straw hat.
But sun cancers thrived despite of that.
'My donkey's breakfast,' or 'My old lid.'
He worn no matter what he did.

This was a man of song.
Our family stereo, our three-in-one,
strumming ukulele or old guitar,
sketching cartoons, telling tales,
of a hard life, and a 'home' afar,
of elegant boarding school days
making fun of brutal of master's ways,
of the use of the rod and staff.
Initiations. What a laugh!
What they had to do to 'arrive!'
Those small boys battling to stay alive
in the England he never quite left.

(He went back there to die. I guess that is the acid test.)

And my most painful regret?
I never used a simple cassette
to record that glorious voice
of that once King's College Choir boy.

Or to thank him and tell him
he brought me much joy.

And I never said the words aloud,
'I love you and you made me proud.'
How I wish my foolish brother could see
through his own male stuff,
what a wonderful man this used to be.

Not inadequate at all,
but more than enough.



Judith's
father:
Christopher
Kempson

POLITICS OF LANGUAGE

(English – A loaded language & the weaponization of words 2024)

There are words–Language.

‘Tell-tale’ words that tell it all.

Exposing truth or disguising facts!

Suspicious history in confused mystery.

Sometimes hypocrisy even humour,

civilises blackest crimes and lies,

disguises guilt and blame,

hides horror, pain, deepest shame,

to justify our fiscal gain!

Hear these...

‘Settlement. Development. Squattocracy

Native. Ignorant. Black.

Apology. Integrity. Giving back.

Righteous. Reconcile. Sorry ‘Jackie’!

Deserve. Fault. Equality.

Integrity. Aristocracy.

Kings and Queens. Lords and Ladies.

Minister. War and Law.

Famine and Feast.

‘Golden’ fleece. On the sheep’s back.

Stock and mine. Stones that shine.

On hoof in hole. Pound and Dollar.

‘Common’-wealth. Conservative.

Pay the toll –Rich and poor. Enough is more!

Protest and rebel.

Winner. Score. Magistrate.
Prejudge. 'Right' and 'Left'
Liberal. Moderate.
Radical - In dictionary say:
From the grass roots. (No Way!)
Love and Hate - 'Good on 'ya mate'

For your piece (peace) in the puzzle...
Consider these:
'Sentenced. Convicted. Convinced. Propaganda.
Reconciliation. Common. Normal. Popular.
Inflation. Rule of Law. Democracy. Benevolent.
(For the poor.)

'I am not prejudiced.' Really?
'So you were not schooled in English like me...'
'Kings English' at that. Law abiding.
Class dictating. Top class. Well bred.

When I was a kid, we played (or at least the boys
did) a game- 'I'm the king of the castle you're
the dirty rascal.' But I was 'just a woman', a
'chick' when young, now a 'silly old chook.'
Past it. No longer counted. No longer
respectable. A bitch; or a witch.
So I'll be off on my broomstick...
Leaving you to ponder how words are weapons,
and poets the warriors of today.



THE HIGHER POWER

(2024)

A higher power than me?
Dear God, there has to be...
When we see the calibre
of the existing earthly
'Powers that be!'
Yet the 'Unknowable Essence of all Things.'
The Baha'i concept of God (Goodness)
is within us all.
You and me!
Making sense of our apparent 'stupidity.'
Our Faith in God's reality.

And 'Satan'- 'The Devil' Baha'is believe
is the 'Persistent Self!' Our Ego. Our Greed.
And lives within us all too.

That's our inner 'Armageddon' and has been,
and will be, through all eternity.
Our choice, our mystery, our struggle, our
challenge, our history, our OMG!
I suggest you don't wait for, or trust in
Artificial Intelligence to win the day to
Bless us and hear us pray.

Baha'i Quote:

To every discerning and illumined heart it is evident that God, the
unknowable Essence, the divine Being, is immensely exalted
beyond every human attribute...Far be it from His glory that human
tongue should adequately recount His praise, or that human heart
comprehend His fathomless mystery.

-Baha'u'llah

THE GREATEST CONSPIRACY EVER (SLANDER OF GOD)

(2024)

Unfortunately, religions
and their 'salesmen' across nations,
have done near terminal damage to God's
reputation.
Man's own greed basest appetite,
careless selfish deeds.
We blame God for!
Blaspheming his eternal score,
'How could God allow it to happen?'
As for our image of him, and what his name
means, what a cartoon- a buffoon,
for what Baha'i's know as
'The unknowable essence of all things.'
As love's magnetic force connecting all beings.
The stuff of spirit and soul. Birthed of Earth,
Water, Fire.
Motivator of you, uplifting emotions,
of human love, hate and desires.
Of sky, stars, moons and dreams,
inspiration for our mightiest schemes.
This is what God is to me.
Oxygen and light, to my spiritual evolution.
The very light towards which I grow.
The 'heaven' to which I must go
when my time is right.

Meantime I'm still here
defending His word for this age,
on this satanic world's page.

Satan Baha'i's know as 'the persistent self', of
ego and greed.

So both are within us all.

Locked in death throes-
love of money and power,
over the miraculous power of love.

Baha'i Quote:

O flame of the love of God! The ray must shed light and the sun must rise; the full moon must shine and the star must gleam. Since thou art a ray, beseech thou the Lord to enable thee to give illumination and enlightenment, to brighten the horizons and to consume the world with the fire of the love of God. I hope that thou mayest attain such a station, nay, surpass it. Upon thee be His glory.

- 'Abdu'l-Bahá

'What is the purpose of our lives?'

'To acquire virtues. We come from the earth; why were we transferred from the mineral to the vegetable kingdom—from the plant to the animal kingdom? So that we may attain perfection in each of these kingdoms, that we may possess the best qualities of the mineral, that we may acquire the power of growing as in the plant, that we may be adorned with the instincts of the animal and possess the faculties of sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste, until from the animal kingdom we step into the world of humanity and are gifted with reason, the power of invention, and the forces of the spirit.'

Baha'i Virtues

1. Knowledge, 2. Faith, 3. Steadfastness, 4. Truthfulness, 5. Uprightness, 6. Fidelity, 7. Evanescence or humility

- 'Abdu'l-Bahá.



THERE WAS GOLD IN THEM HILLS

(1996- Vic & Tess golden wedding anniversary)

Once upon a time...
Or should I say...
Once upon a lot of times
That now, have passed away...
Young Tess and Vic Brill
Went up life's hill
And now, they have climbed a whole range!

They've crossed gulleys and all
And never once did they fall.
Despite climate in drastic change
From droughts to flooding rains.
And constantly moving terrains.
Always they were found
On the moral high ground
Taking time to stand.
With indigenous brothers.
And for less fortunate others.
And always, they cared for the land.

Oh yes, these two were REAL "green."
Long before there was such scene.
They stayed faithfully together, too.
Something few have managed to do.
Resisted the century's heart disease.
The lust for thrills, the need for gold.
Fear of commitment and growing old.
Not for them the powerless apathy.

That saps motivation utterly.

They always had some work to do.
They never were, just passing through.
They routed bushrangers in blue suits.
Exposed guilty swags, and ill-gotten loots.
And it seems to me that they have found.
REAL gold, not exploitation from the ground.
They have planted some very strong seeds.
Beloved children, and inspiring deeds.

All along their ways.
To live and grow in future days.
A little one is deep in me.
And in the people who learned much reality.
From the way they are, and the way they see.
And their living example of sanity.

Tess and Vic I am here to say.
You make it look easy, just like play.
But we all know, so very well.
There must have been times, it seemed like hell!
When pain and illness visited you.
And when you despaired of,
What was right to do.

I see you nod, and reminiscence smiles.
And I see the courage and integrity.
That faced such trials and adversity.
And folks. That's the way, I want to be.

I tell you. You have the pot of gold.
One that can never be bought or sold.
I offer this Bundjalung totem.
Painted by one of the tribe.
Symbolic of your love for those people.
And your work to keep them, and their country
alive.

I wish I could tell you the painter's name.
But his history is not a biography.
Entered in halls of fame.
But is like goanna prints in the sand.
Of his great Gondwanaland.
Which has better and brighter destiny.
Because the Brills, also tracked the territory.

Footnote:

Beloved departed member of
Lismore Woman group,
Tess Brill
was the feisty 80 referred to in the
'Little Five-Oh poem (p.228)'

THE BIG WHY IN THE SKY

(War in New York – City of the Covenant 11/09/2001)

‘Why mum?’

‘Why?!’

And... ‘What do I tell my son? About the obscene love affair, between religion and the gun?!’

They are killing in God’s name...

When all is fired and done.

This is profanity.

What is their defence?

Where is common sense?

‘God is Love,’ you said.

When you tucked us into bed...

And ‘Do unto others.’

The golden rule of our Sunday School.

‘Thou shalt not kill.’

The Good Book said, yet now, in New York,
thousands are dead!

Mum... Is God a fool?

Where in all this mess, is God-ness?

Who do they pray to. Muslim and Jew?

There are so many teachings.

Buddhist and Zen.

Bhagavad-Gita, and Torah.

Both sacred texts.

Bible and Koran God-speak to men.

Yet we grow daily even more perplexed.

I try to read these ancient words.
But frankly, Mum- they seem absurd.
Explain Mum... Explain!
They say life will never be the same.
And I am in very deep spiritual pain.

I remember it well...
The seeking, questioning hell.
Over twenty years past, in darkest night.
At the end of my tunnel came a glimmer of light.
Like the sense that came from global facts,
that did away with the earth being flat.
Pieces of puzzle fell into place,
befitting a world that travels in space.
A world where we can understand,
a globe that is one universal land.
Where lines on a map, or colour of skin,
cannot divide this one world's kin.

And best of all...
God made sense.
When I found His teachings in present tense.
I found a timeline of history,
with Prophets
as enlightened men for a particular,
there and then.
Where baking desert under the feet,
made perfect sense of kosher meat.
And living with camels in desert sands,
made urgent need for hygiene with hands.
Where the language and stories had to relate,

to a man, his oxen, and his chattel mate.
There people did not even know,
how their body's seed could grow.
Had no books, just tablets of stone,
and the whole world consisted of their bit alone.
They knew nothing of people in distant places.
Other colours. Other races.

First light to this child of round-table knights,
who killed infidels, to protect our rights.
Was to learn the truth of our history, removed
from the bias of men,
who cloaked it all in mystery,
perpetuating an evil enemy- 'Them.'

When I found the infidel had no horns and
followed the word of God.
But they called on him as 'Allah.'
Well, that didn't seem to matter a lot.

As it all began to unfold...
Came the shattering shock of being told,
that all the Prophets taught the same...
First...
Love of God and man.
That all the other teachings were just a
regional social plan.
Fashioned for the age.
For that place on history's page.

I could see how any God would cry,
at the slowness of our learning
and the madness we applied.
When we justified deep hate,
by the clothes a fellow wore
or the kind of food he ate.

And all said another one would come,
when their time and race was run.
But followers clinging to the past,
demand each is the only or (definitely) the last!
They heap fanatic's fury on any newly risen
One.
Greeting one with a cross, another with a gun.
As in Jerusalem, so in Iran (The land of the three
wise men)
In 1844 it did...

It all occurred again.

They gave The Bab the fruit of that gun,
and Baha'u'llah,
twenty-five years in prison,
alongside his eldest son.

But through all the blood and hate and clouds of
war and fear.
Let me show you a wondrous silver lining.
I assure you...
God's new day is here.

You did right to ask me,
'Why...?'
Why hell has rained down from the sky.
And the answer my child is in why-
Your Mother is a Bahá'í.



Bahá'í Quote:

The utterance of God is a lamp, whose light is these words: Ye are the fruits of one tree, and the leaves of one branch. Deal ye one with another with the utmost love and harmony, with friendliness and fellowship. He Who is the Daystar of Truth beareth Me witness! So powerful is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole earth. The One true God, He Who knoweth all things, Himself testifieth to the truth of these words. Exert yourselves that ye may attain this transcendent and most sublime station, the station that can insure the protection and security of all mankind. This goal excelleth every other goal, and this aspiration is the monarch of all aspirations.

-Bahá'u'llah

AROUND THE WOLD IN A TOTAL DAYZE
(1995)

It was answers we went out to seek,
Not knowing the questions (so to speak.)
Traversed three months, the planets stage,
Without a script... just... this is IT!
Not easy, at arthritic age, itinerary, economics
based, was to be friends and family placed,
seeking familiar names and faces,
in far flung unfamiliar places.
Families aren't what they used to be.
We elders have kin across every sea,
Pacific, Atlantic, even Artic we flew,
Past temperate tropical equator through.

First south Africa, new democracy, walking
people carried burdens smilingly. But the shiny
ebony faces, meant paranoia in highest places.
Lock and bolt on every door, as second line
defence, ARMED RESPONSE on every fence.
(Never found out who responded to whom, how
and when, and what for.)
The servants that called us master and ma'am,
seemed too busy to plot any evil plan.
We were sad not to share a cup of tea, with these
declared 'members of family.'
There is acknowledgement that Nelson Mandala,
everyone says (is a really nice fella),
but he is in deep shit with his clan...
'I want my house and cars NOW MAN!'

Political encouragement with confused score,
reminds how much better 'it' was before?
Black taxi, colourful kombi vans, are more like
motorised sardine cans. Traffic speeds of 120,
cause fatal horror smashes a plenty, black bodies
so quickly cleared away. Don't even rate a
headline next day. But freedoms arrived. It's
everywhere. With coca cola here and mc
Donald's there. The environment surrounds,
raises white flags.

In an overwhelming plague of plastics bags.
Soweto your bare tin shacks cause me pain.
But less, than you're drowning in plastic rain.
'Little things mean a lot.' They say, they
certainly do when you toss them away.
If I have lessons from this to task,
it's don't give plastic an even break.

In England and somehow 'coming home.'
Loches on the Thames; mossy woods to roam,
and a different view of history.
From hundreds of years to hundred BC, shadows
of druids, Stonehenge surround, Romans and
celts under mounds being found. Clotted cream
and Devon smores, thatched rooves, oak beams
and miniature doors.
Mc Donald's and Coke, yes here they be.
But commerce keeps itself 'nicely' low key.
But here too containers are winning the day.

Ghost of plastic crouch beside each motor way.
But gentility survives be it just a 'veneer' and
they do have delightful pubs for their beer.
I met great new family face to face, and found
my father's resting place,
but never found a hedgehog,
that's another missing race.
Like wildlife almost everywhere, they are
sentimental postcard fair, a souvenir of what
used to be.
But what did I learn?
Let me see.
Well, I overdosed on antiquity,
and found some deep inside of ME.
Found cultural roots one might say in places and
legends of my father's day. I said my last to my
dad's headstone.
He's back in his 'old country' all alone.
We found friends too in the land of the Rhine.
But much still to heal after all this time.
Rawest of scar 30 years past the fall, in the
hearts of the people and on wounded walls.
History queries uncomfortable wise?
Have not yet been answered or silenced the
cries, of mothers that follow ever war that kills.
(Enshrined in cold brass, they are palpable still)
It takes antiquity all Europe knows, to lay green
balm of green forts where finest grapes grow.

Over Iceland we reached the USA.
Never expected to travel that way!
Glaciers Icebergs and snow.
Just have to say – ‘What a way to go.’
Ice forming pattens on the glass and we sat on
our shirtsleeves watching it pass.
Plastic bags?
I could not see, but they are there says best
authority.

Now in the land of the brave and the free, a
long-lost daughter I came to see. American
husband and children too, wondering what crazy
Aussies would do. On San Andreas fault they sit
and wait, for the biggest shift of that awesome
plate. ‘Mild’ tremors punctuated our stay, like
taking off and landing every day.
We took advice like- Never sleep without cover
on body, as well as for feet. Flashlight (not
torch) and exit plans, re-running on your head.
Our here a torch is burning spar and they laugh
too at boots and bonnets on cars.
Because of their volcanic history they do have
the biggest you can see. Grand Canyon and
Yosemite majesty, ‘Look at that rock.’ Someone
called out, ‘What rock?’ Some response.
And we all fell about, in hysterical laughter for
what else do you see?
Rock scapes in statement of infinity!
Ever evolving shadows and light.

Paint heart stopping beauty sings creations
might. The lesson I garnered from this class,
hard won self-esteem became quite a farce.
Life skill and knowledge left me at a loss.
And a gasp of 'My God you are the boss.'
And the daughter?
Still there in LA.

I feel for her heartbeats every day, she went over
there for a dream, that never was a part of my
scheme, based on wartime score of 'Yanks',
but I now know at least one reasonable
American guy.

I welcome the fun of Yankee boot scooting,
but do they care about plastic polluting,
when you throw them away, but they don't seem
to care. We saw the glitter of Las Vegas, some
obscenities there too outrage, not the booze or
topless nubile, or the pyramids of the Nile, but
millions of kilowatts flying amidst a desert
dying. Babylon's greed in a dire need, as Indian
begging at the door as their culture is peddled
with nick-nacks galore.

We went from LA's 12 lane madness to western
Samoa and tropical gladness, from food process
to a lifeless state, 'eating out' every other meal
we ate. To sweet air and fresh food picked by
hand, (same standards of living to judge any
land.) The speed limit 25 miles per hour, but
most of the time, use your OWN power.

No need for seat belts or road rule fuss, when the wheels beneath you are a pink wooden bus, or someone's utility taking the lot, great air conditioning and the equator is hot, the time of arrival, just wait they will smile, busses go round and round all the while. Doesn't matter where, or which side you stand. They all go to town. Just wave a hand.

Where to disembark or meet?

Near the big tree, (there's no names of the street.) Police in sarongs and sandals you see, smiling colour for tourist photography. Or om-pa-pa-ing in the local band. Or giving a child or elder a hand, we couldn't tell but reflect on the mess, develop lands proudly called progress, coke is there, but no McDonalds yet.

The economy is struggling on that you can bet. But not struggling so much that can't find some plastic in every backyard.

And politics? The head of states a Baha'i.

Yes that took us there is you wondered why.

A temple in the jungle stands as an umbrella on pacific sands. Spreading the concept of unity, unity in diversity.

Diverse culture we had travelled to see, found exploiter and degradations. Universally.

Craft claimed made my indigenous hand, were mass made in China, Philippines or Thailand.

Global warming was very real.

No long a theory or greenie spiel, bankrupt
environments, spirits bent politic power and
spirits bent, violence and drugs all the go, makes
you think about reap what you sew.

But in the tiny Samoan place.

We saw some hope for the huma race.

Found live in Baha'u'llah prophecy of a small
land rising amid the sea, to lead the world in a
spiritual way, from troubled times to a bright
new day.

Have we gained wisdom on the meaning of life?

We certainly saw the world is in strife.

We can't sum up on right or wrong.

(As it is this poem is too plastic long)

But we hope the prints left by our feet, did no
harm and left things sweet.

And although plastic bags seem the enemy,

I suspect the truth is you and me.

I am afraid that is all I have to share.

For the rest it you had to be there.

Footnote:

The most inspirational and magical part of this moment in our trip
was in South Africa – Johannesburg, 1994. I witnessed Nelson
Mandela becoming Prime Minister of South Africa. We had the
privilege of hearing and seeing him on television and radio, in print
and newspaper. I have to say both my beloved David and I were so
overwhelmed with every word that incredible man spoke, the entire
process they embarked upon with Reverend Desmond Tutu,
organising Truth and Reconciliation in this post-apartheid state.
When we came home, we were fantasizing in a way that Australia
could have the same process of reconciliation here. But the truth
issue was and still is missing, unfulfilled and denied in Australia.

Baha'i Quote:

‘If I be slain at your hands, God will assuredly raise up one who will fill the seat made vacant through my death; for such is God’s method carried into effect of old, and no change can ye find in God’s mode of dealing.’ ‘Should they attempt to conceal His light on the continent, He will assuredly rear His head in the midmost heart of the ocean and, raising His voice, proclaim:
‘I am the life giver of the world!’

-Baha'u'llah



In the mid-most point of the ocean, on the equator... ‘Samoa’-the 1st country where the ruling royalty (Malietoa) became a Baha’i. See poem ‘When the time is right’ p.241

‘RESPONSIBLE’

(Drawn from self-discovery at the Degree in Self Communication at
Hawksbury Agricultural College with beloved women’s group
1981)

And the counsellor asked,
‘Why is it that your pattern is responsibility?’
Good question!
Re-evaluation counselling many years before,
revealed to me, my life pattern was
responsibility.
What is that?
There are too many dimensions to it.
Taking on the ‘fixing’, ‘solving’,
of the world’s problems.
And being guilty of having allowed them,
even caused them.
Are they the two sides of one coin?
Do I have both?
Where do they come from?
Is it a virtue or a disease.
Am I an angel or mentally sick, or normal.

I remember early research demonstrated
responsibility comes from a special part of the
brain,
(Not developed in male brains until about age
25, in the female- mid childhood!)

Sure seemed the case with my brother and I.
So this could be primal stuff,
creating risk taking for the hunting male.
Nurturing and protection for the female- mother.

No choice, but hormones,
and is it why God keeps so many
old women alive?

Or is it just that we survive.
Why we, the 'weaker' live so long.
Outliving the 'strong'.

Baha'i Quote:

'The woman has greater moral courage than the man; she has also special gifts which enable her to govern in moments of danger and crisis.'

– **Abdu'l-Baha'**



Judith formed the Australian Association for Geriatric Nursing Group, later known as 'Geriation' - a group of nursing home matrons studying management through UNSW and producing the 'Geriation Newsletter.' Designed to lift standards of nursing home management. And remains a life member of this group.

Judith owned and run the Currawong Nursing Home in Ashfield Sydney for 25 years. And was granted first geriatric nursing certificate by NSW State Health Department.

UNITY BLESSED UNITY

(At Hawksbury College Associate Diploma
Social Communication 1981)

Unity. Blessed Unity!
We are only one.
Here, for a moment, we knew that.
We strained against the pull
from the Divine Centre
and held fast to false beginnings and endings,
clinging to our individuals...
Our 'selves.'

But Love, the ultimate magnetic attraction.
Powerful, irresistible, spiritual fusion.
Drew us back to the circle of one.

Looking into your souls,
I see only mine.
Reflection. Recognition.
The echoed call of like to like.

Competition is the contra force
we employ to divide our-selves.
Hate and anger are the friction
of rapid movement,
as we rotate on our axis
and our universe multiplies.

But we can never resist loves magnetic pull
back to the One...and the reality that we travel

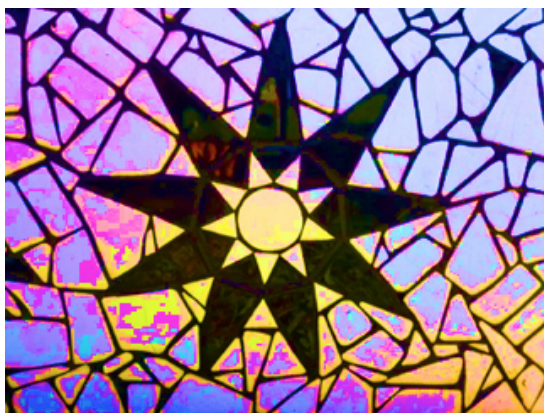
on the same fragile, precious space craft.
Here gazing into the depths
of all your souls.
Mirrored in your eyes.
all I see is me... all around is we
and the me,
and the we,
of to be and I am...

Is One.

Baha'i Quote:

The utterance of God is a lamp, whose
light is these words: Ye are the fruits of one tree,
and the leaves of one branch. Deal ye one with
another with the utmost love and harmony, with
friendliness and fellowship. He Who is the
Daystar of Truth beareth Me witness! So powerful
is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole
earth

- Bahá'u'lláh



‘ISMS’

(2022)

My English squattocracy culture was a breeding
ground of Isms.

The worst of viral pandemics, prejudice, tearing
apart the universal heart,
the very soul of unity.

Disease most foul, Satan’s ego bastard children,
with dreaded addition to compete,
to create others from the one mother.

My journey to light uncovers- sexism, racism,
classism, materialism, hate.

And now comes agism, when I am at last – slow
of body and brain.

Too weak for the fight,
but thank God for spiritual light.

Isms cannot survive where God is alive.

True vaccine.

Vanishing satanic persistent self.

The sickness of humanity.

HIDDEN DEEDS

(1994)

"Work in the Spirit of Service is Prayer"
Thank-you Sue, for a Life that was Prayer.

(Sue Borlais was the first live-in Manager of the Life Resources Exchange we set up in Lismore, with the aim of helping people, especially in their personal development and spiritual search... Wholistic health, addiction-free living and natural therapy, were high on the Agenda. It was a refuge and a "home" to many people in its 12 years of operation. Sue and I were the Baha'is involved, and our dream was a Baha'i Centre, and a better world).

In October 1994, we closed the door,
of the L.R.E...
The Life Resources Exchange, that used to be.
In March 1979, Sue and
I brought the dream online
To build a better world. We'd try.
Our agenda, a blueprint called Baha'i.
But only yesterday, I removed the last
Of the books, tapes and teachings of the past.
This resource, this "life" I took, the day
That Sue's last breath was sighed away.

She was at the heart, in the "kitchen's" heat
Day and night without retreat.
Smiling, soft-spoken, with love for all,
She daily answered Baha'u'llah's call.

I remember so clearly, one special day
She said Remover of Difficulties, was a good
way to pray.

And that broken down car we were in
Got us there, despite a terrible din!
So many times, in those difficult years,
We turned to that prayer amidst anger and tears!
It was her that taught me too.
That spirit of service, in work, was a prayer that
Baha'is could DO.

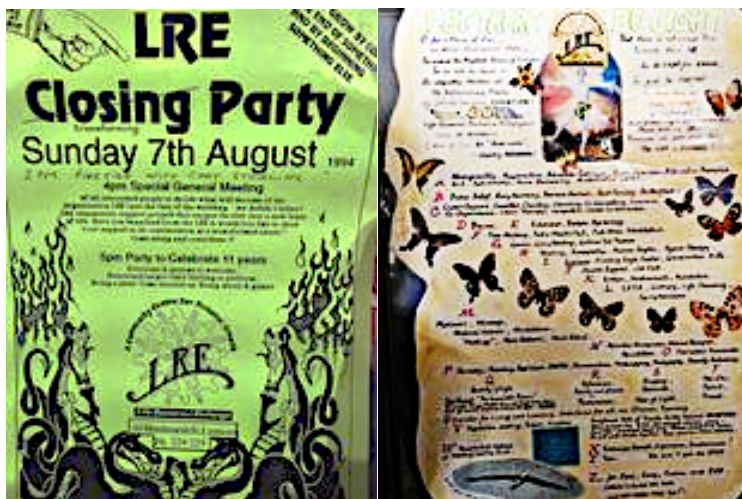
She so loved the natural, and longed to heal
The hurting folk, with whom we must deal.
And never far from her mind
Was the cure for Derek's injury, she never
doubted she could find.
Adrian, Tania and Derek, grew tall in this crazy
spot,
And learnt they had to share, their mothers time,
with the others there.
Not such an easy thing to do...at this late-stage
kids, I thank you too.
Also thanks to Keith, the man,
Who fulfilled that last, important plan.
To share love and the Faith, in a wonderful
whole. A relationship of body, mind, and soul.

Sue, the doors they are a-closing, on all our lofty
dreams,
But the Abha Kingdom's opening a much bigger
door, it seems.
And now that you have passed, this earthly
workshop through,

I suspect, to get real wisdom will be easier for you.

Just rain on us your gentle love
From that Eternal Resource Centre,
With the Concourse up above.

Thanks, and good-bye, dear girl.
(You were always such to me)
Like the picture in the temple there...
Sweet Innocence with golden hair,
Dwarfed by the wooden podium,
enlarged by a book of prayer.
Now enjoy the limitless form, that none of us
can see, at last, fully, truly, natural, and
absolutely free.



Posters from Judith's Life Resources Exchange –
a community place for self-discovery and community connection

TIME SPACE

(2022)

What is the time?

I have a watch with confusing hands.

The hour and minute hands are
indistinguishable- interchangeable. A challenge
especially in the dark of night.

Our attempts to measure and control lineal time
confuse us.

Truth is life journey- is not lineal.

Reality is an individual experience.

It is a spiritual evolution. No beginning or end.
Where we travel with other souls, through other
places, other lessons, other experiences being
environmental, not an orderly experience, but a
floating a passing through.

Nothing actually dies, the best and the worst are
yet to come. Enjoy and welcome, this
enlightenment, this wholistic life.

Not measured or controlled by which hand on
my watch is 'correct'.

This is our fate. It has no date. This is our
pandemic, and they lie.

Vaccination will not control or stop it.

Sometime – We all die.

I AM THEREFORE I CAN'T

(2011)

'I'm leaving if God's mentioned here.'
So ended the debate!
I was shocked... and I was puzzled...
by the intensity of hate from a woman of our ten,
gathering as 'sisters', to liberate from men,
as Ugly ducklings became swans,
amongst genetic mates,
challenging the 'turkeys', who scored us second
rate.
Often since I've heard that angry God inflection.
As Adam's rib rises up in gender pain reflection.

Now that is why, I'm a Baha'i,
embracing modern teaching.
Science and religion as one,
belie such gender preaching.
Labels can't encompass a sun,
energising everything, everyone.
Such enlightenment is more suggestive of the
Omnipresence.
Of one all-powerful Creator,
Baha's call, The Unknowable Essence.

The big bang and worm holes,
we now strive to understand
and to analyse the forces that created all the
lands.

Or better still all galaxy's,
we try to take 'in hand!'
We feel we've come so very far from
flat earth superstitions,
not for us, ancient magic tricks,
and meaningless repetitions,
Yet... The mighty 'they',
the know-it-all's who 'always say',
the scientific academics,
with the good oil for today,
say universal matter is
ninety-eight percentage black
and admit they haven't understood even one
percent of that!
Can't test or measure, see or feel, hear, or utilise
but they know it's the creative force,
in our atmospheric skies.

There is no 'up there' place with heavenly harps
and wings.
Nor hell burning below, with hooves, horns and
forked things.
Our dimensions have expanded.
Quantum physics all the go.
Science of the unseen expands our thinking so.
BUT like eternal doors,
each question opens just one more
and each needs a brand-new key,
on and on to infinity.
Oh, cheeky man... Your ego yearns to be the
all-knowing I AM.

But to take on God as a rival,
is a daunting and risky plan.
Makes **you** Satan! In Baha'i terms,
‘The persistent self’ in man.

There is peace of mind in accepting
comprehension's limits in life.
Trying to exceed them,
as with ignoring our traffic warnings,
can lead to nasty accidents; police on your case;
deep personal strife.

God is the UNKNOWABLE Essence
of all we are and see.
Knowing how things go round,
how they started, where and when,
is truly remarkable, could be miraculous
it's true, but then,
it doesn't give us the master plan,
the big question in the sky.
(Monty Python's hilarious
‘Meaning of Life’ left us without a clue
and their colleagues the
Galactic Hitchhikers gave up at 42)

We can work out the mechanics.
Sort time and space even travel them,
but the big one will always be...
Why is there a creation?
And why is there a me?

There's a footnote to this God thing.
The 'non-existent' sent some down
Prophets in every age came to us.
We've thrown them out of town.
They came to show us how to live,
what to believe and why.
Suiting the time and our capacity,
with new message from 'On High'
All taught love of God and
love thy neighbour too.
Pointed to peace and goodness,
gave us some virtues to do.
Study Religion as history,
progressively turning the pages
and surprise surprise you will see,
God's timeline through the ages.
They differ only in place and time
and needs of the people in that clime.

And of course, they were rejected by
vested interests... Status-quo
Crucified, imprisoned, shot.
No instant fame or fortune
in a Holy prophet's lot!
No paparazzi milling round,
no shrieking fans to swoon.

But Krishna, Christ; the Buddha, Mohammed,
Baha'u'llah, said

**‘I am not dead, but with you still’ and
‘I will be back soon.’**



Baha'i Prayer for the Departed:

O my God! O Thou forgiver of sins, bestower of gifts, dispeller of afflictions! Verily, I beseech thee to forgive the sins of such as have abandoned the physical garment and have ascended to the spiritual world. O my Lord! Purify them from trespasses, dispel their sorrows, and change their darkness into light. Cause them to enter the garden of happiness, cleanse them with the most pure water, and grant them to behold Thy splendours on the loftiest mount.

- Abdu'l-Bahá

To consider that after the death of the body the spirit perishes is like imagining that a bird in a cage will be destroyed if the cage is broken, though the bird has nothing to fear, from the destruction of the cage.

Our body is like the cage and the spirit is like the bird...

If the cage becomes broke the bird will continue and exist, its feeling will be even more powerful, its perception greater and its happiness increased.

Oh God of the supreme, I have death a messenger of joy to thee, where fore dost thou grieve? I have made the light to shine on its splendour, why dost thou veil themselves therefrom.

-Baha'u'llah

-THE ‘TALE’ END-

Prose by Judith Light

MY FOREIGN LANGUAGE

(2011)

I think the 'world language' will help, especially the language of Love... But my humble posture of learning reminds me that my efforts in Chinese or French or.... ANY FOREIGN LANGUAGE would be so much worse!

Did you ever see the film 'Outsourcing'?
Such a hoot and so smart that they make such fun of their own situation... Laughing at themselves...
The best kind of laughter, I think.
I laugh at the New Delhi bit with our technical assistance calls with Telecom etc. But on the other hand, their courage, guts, determination and initiative to survive is very humbling.

When overseas, even my accent totally bluffed people, to the extent that at the Baha'i Bosch school in Santa Cruz California, volunteering on the tables to pay my rent. My first experience with a customer said, 'Oh you are from Australia? We love Australia.'
I asked, 'What part of Australia did you like best?' and they said, 'New Zealand.'
I pointed out that this is a bit like saying, 'The best part of the USA is Canada.'

I was asked to read a prayer at the devotionals. They said, 'We love having foreign language readings.'
My shocked response that I was speaking 'English' just made them laugh....
In Paris my schoolgirl 'A' level French was of no use whatsoever. Never found me in the right toilets, where I ended up washing my hands in the adjacent male urinal.

I found no use whatsoever in ‘la plume de ma tante est sur le table.’

Never met an aunt who needed to be told her pen was on the table!

In England my tape-recorded interviews with English social workers/therapists etc when played back, almost convinced me never to open my mouth again (almost).

I had been told as a child I had a ‘Pommy’ accent...

‘Posh’ in the ‘Ourtown’ areas of Australia...

Even thought I might make it to the ABC radio someday...

What a shock to hear that awful nasal Aussie twang against the real English accent (The Queen's English as my Dad always called it).

Footnote:

My father was approached by the famous Gwen Meredith of Blue Hills Radio fame, to consider going on the ABC programme Blue Hills, as he had the ‘perfect ABC voice’ for that time.

Oh how the times/ABC has changed...

Baha’i Quote:

One of the great steps towards universal peace would be the establishment of a universal language. Baha’u’llah commands that the servants of humanity should meet together, and either choose a language which now exists, or form a new one.

-Abdu’l-Bahá

O members of parliaments throughout the world! Select ye a single language for the use of all on earth and adopt ye likewise a common script. God, verily, maketh plain for you that which shall profit you and enable you to be independent of others. He, of a truth, is the Most Bountiful, the All-Knowing, the All-Informed.

-Bahá’u’lláh

A 'ONCE UPON A DIME' STORY

(1999 -Lament for stolen generation)

I Remember the days of King Kong, astride skyscrapers
clutching diminutive blonde in ravaging claws....
Roaring Armageddon threats to the whole city; stomping
on the environment, and the populace in the streets?

Well, he's back.... And he has changed...

But very little.

Now he's a Horseman of the Apocalypse...
Giant Marlborough Man astride the streets of Beijing.
No oriental visage under that 'real man', cowboy hat.
What recycling!
Outlawed billboards from the West, deported to the East
without even needing a touch up...

What a slick sleight of hand... No-one noticed the Knave
of spades, on quarter horse slickly concealed in a
tobacco giant's sleeve when he shuffled off our streets.
What a deal from the Kings of Western Capitalism
to the East. What a cultural coup!

About 4 years ago, a tobacco company representative
was asked on television (a telling vision indeed!)

"In the light of present-day evidence of damage
to health... How do you justify your company's
massive promotion in the East and third world
countries?"

Was I the only person to see that interview,
and the barefaced reply?

"No scientific proof that smoking is deleterious
to those populations, at this time, as it would appear it
might be in the west."

Yes, he did... He said that! Open mouthed, I waited for lightening to strike the set; accusing newspaper headlines; for someone, anyone, to voice outrage.... Silence...

One more piece of s*** fed into our collectively wide-open psyches, without a burp or a hiccough.

“You’re a fanatic mum....” My kid’s object. Everyone would accept panic and demand fast reaction to rescue a child teetering on the edge of a dangerous drop... a staircase... a cliff edge... running out in front of highway traffic....

That is how I feel when I see my young ones...

Anyone’s children... lighting up a killer cigarette!

I want to cry out “Danger!”

I silently scream HELP.

At 6 years old I treasure hunted good quality, only “slightly used” butts, for my addicted Father.

Tobacco was rationed during the war for those not in uniform, but freely given to “fighting men”.

The message, “let ‘em die happy”.

Every dying man in the war movies brainwashing us on the glory of the battle, had a fag inserted into his final gasp by a fellow “hero”.

Dad's volunteer badge declared him unfit to fight, so he had to pay dearly for his manly ammunition, with ration tickets as well as cash.

Like the rum, sugar, flour and tobacco of our early settlements, cigarettes were currency, and the bounty uniforms on leave, brought home to their families, along with chocolate for the kids.

Peacetime came. My first assertive act - to resign my job, as youngest in the family, emptying the household’s ashtrays, resolving never again to touch anyone else's

cigarettes.... I never have. Never to put such an insult to my own lips, and I never have.

Subsequently, I still have a sense of smell...and sensitive mucous membranes. Something of a disability in to-days world.

I had to give up a year of my nursing career to help my father through the complete removal of his lung; watch him sob through nightmares of being engulfed by the cancer, as an invasive triffid-like plant digesting his body; witness his years of overwhelming struggle with the nicotine addiction, from the moment he came out of the anaesthetic. (He was shocked to see all his bedfellows in the post-operative chest ward reaching for a fix... He at least resisted that, committing himself to years of sucking on endless boiled lollies and becoming diabetic.

I had to stomach the movie world selling ...the "romance" of rising smoke; and the "sophistication" for women of posing and gesturing manicured hands. The ultimate turn-on was he or she is lighting a cigarette, caressing it, putting it suggestively to the partner's lips. and the deep dragging in of the smoke. We weren't allowed copulation on our screens. all done by suggestion in those days. For male stars there was the dramatized Marlborough type punctuation and emphasis of match lighting, powerful drawbacks and the flicking away, in reckless "damn it" gesture of the barely smoked cigarettes. (Who has not laughed at the pimply faced boy. demonstrating his manliness with a fag or even a dead match?? Remember smoke rings?) I have lived long enough to see the "idols" of silver screen in early fade out, one after another, with cancer of the lung and its cousins, emphysema and heart disease

I had to watch my friends and family, and the next generation of my five daughters, flirt with the "coolness" of it all and "buy" the con completely. In this war for the hearts, minds, and bodies of our children, the enemy has million-dollar weapons, and paedophilic appetites. There is the most fiendish hook for young females too, of "I can't give up. I will gain the dreaded unforgivable kilos" Mothers are easily annihilated with "killjoy" and "wowser" labels. and the ultimate antidote to elder wisdom. "What would you know??"

Guess what...??

PLENTY!!

I KNOW SO MUCH IT HURTS. I KNOW THE GAME
AND THE ROTTEN GREED OF THE OPPONENT.
THE BIASED RULES AND THE POWER THAT
MANIPULATES THE BOARD... MOST OF ALL.
I KNOW THE FINAL SCORE.

I watched a father-in-law, and a mother-in-law, die from Emphysema.

My present dear husband's first wife died from the same, and we watch in despair, OUR children and grandchildren, treading the same path.

Recently David had a stroke. doctors NOW say the probable cause was his early smoking. and "passive" smoking years with his deceased wife!

I have watched the growth of Asthma and S.I.D.S. with our children in the community and seen how slowly and quietly statistics are made public of "smoking connections"...still no definitive proof of course. All my life I have listened to the garbage of "no absolute scientific proof" of the harm done by smoking, despite the absolute evidence of my own eyes and my

professional experience. I have watched nurses and doctors, move from being in the vanguard of smoking. So popular the defence, 'Well my doctor smokes'. Many of my friends and colleagues have predeceased me. The professionals are quietly cleaning up their own act but are predictably slow to admit the errors of the past. Emphysema was called 'The old men's disease', when I was a nursing trainee. Since "liberation" allowed women to smoke, during and after the war, we now have complete equality with this disease. Liberation indeed.

I have had to live with the abomination of ashtrays, "butt" filled and for 60 years have fought for clean air to breath especially when people smoked everywhere. including theatres. buses, trains, planes, restaurants ... everywhere. Occasionally people would ask 'Do you mind if I smoke?' A positive response to that brought disbelief, shock, even abuse or at best would be laughingly ignored. I longed to imitate the response of a brave friend who used to reply to this query 'Not at all...as long as you don't mind if I fart in your face.'

And... I am no PASSIVIST....smoker either – 'smoke did NOT get in my eyes. so, to speak. my version of that romantic line. 'They say some day you'll find. all who smoke are blind.' I of course reply, "when the lovely flame dies. Smoke has wrecked your lives." Oh sneaky language to infer peaceful acceptance when evil assault is being done. That good old Aussie boy Hoges and his "anyhow. Have one" that swept away thousands of kids just when they were getting some clue to the dangers...of course - fun is taking risks isn't it? living dangerously... ignoring your elders.

I fought back. I helped support and finance the "Bugaup" campaign in its brilliant use of Tobacco billboards to turn messages around. Someone scale the Beijing monster now and change "Marlborough" to "Vile and Boring" as those brave clowns used to do. I wonder would the Chinese characters convert...?

I fought the good fight for some clean air in public places... yes, I was one of those who forced airlines buses and trains to the brink. Clean air became almost as important as the service of a drink

It is a war, and I'll fight, to the death, (as is so tragically often the case) I will defend myself and those I love.

The ultimate weapon the Marlborough Man yanks from his holster is ridicule. "Old bag, wowser, square." It will take more than a few sniggers and labels to frighten me. I have survived more subtle dirty tricks than that, in my life.

No. You won't get me...with your smoking guns!

And the "Kool" image...?

Guess what kids you have been suckered like sheep to feed almighty multinational greed.

(Every sheep in a mob thinks security is the tail in front of it)

You have swallowed more "baa baa" to the puff, than any of us oldies who have gone before, and whom you so scornfully abhor.

I have lives to save...

If that makes me a 'fanatic.' I am proud to be one, like Yul Brynner

dying of cancer and challenging that paper cowboy to one last draw.

They censored him. 'Dropped' him on the cutting room floor.

'They' banned his advertisements.

too effective that dying man just begging

‘Don’t Smoke.’

In his memory and in his name, I say

‘Lights.... off. Stop the camera, and the inaction.’

Send this idiotic monster on horseback off into one last
blazing sunset.

My Mother said it...

‘Those who live by the fag...die by the fag,’ well... she
said ‘gun...’

Both ‘bull-shit boy’ (and ‘girl’ in liberation times)
instruments of death, when all is sold and done!!



OUR TOWN

This is a true story. Irrelevant facts such as dates, names, location have been erased and distorted through the lens of time and the view from another reality's dimensions in a long sometimes tortuous life's journey. Just know that it is true. It yet remains, beyond the rigors of marriages, childbirths and career's gone wrong and illnesses, deaths and loss of most beloved and most "significant others". My peak experience of terror and an indelible lesson in the bestiality of which humanity is capable and its inherent dangers.

Some 65 years ago in Queensland, there was a small gem of rural beauty, tranquillity and simplicity. The dawn to dark routine of monotonous hard work was dictated by the urgency and inevitability of the twice daily "bringing in" and hand milking of the herd. Coarse, red knuckled, overstressed hands worked beside small inadequate overstretched ones forced into early maturity and capacity... Dairy farming was a family venture, and the "oldest" family was royalty and had unquestioned legitimacy and authority in the district. The king and queen, with names like Ron and Marjorie... names inherited from generations of predecessors in the local farming hierarchy of size, richness and time, of establishment of acreage ownership and of productive quality milking stock.

Intellect, knowledge of, achievement and fame, in the "outside" world were of no account here in, shall we call it "Ourtown". Here, where the baker, butcher, grocer, post-office and pub demanded weekly pilgrimage by horse, with or without cart, or for a privileged few by "Ute" or tractor for collection of mail and provisions. The weather, the welfare of stock, and for amusement and entertainment the stature, achievements, and prized eccentricities of individual bulls, and the price **their** calves were "bringing" was the "talk".

"Playtime or morning break" were the benign descriptions of the period around 10am, at the local school. the real seat of government in "Ourtown" and where the patriarchal hierarchy and credentials of Ron and Marjorie were most obvious in the stature of Ron and Marjorie juniors. Theirs's the unquestioned responsibility and authority to manage the "play" and the "break". In a one-teacher country school, the contracted first year post-graduate from teacher's college serving his or her agreed year in such a situation, very quickly found their place in the community... and quickly understood the supreme power of Ron and Marjorie Snr. and their

loyal constituency... this was no democracy, but a dictatorship never authorized but absolute in the reality of its tradition. "The way it's always been done around here". Beware any attempt to discipline or reprimand such royal progeny. The all-powerful parent and citizen committee would immediately ring with outrage and heads could role... no need to ask who the executive officers on the P. & C. who had been ever since anyone could recall.

So, one particular "playtime", as usual the very new and nervous Miss Green carefully closeted herself in the classroom and Ron and Marjorie jnr. set off into the play battlefield in a somewhat grey and chilly day, bored and seeking adventure, the troops straggling along behind munching their apples or home baked cake or biscuits, and beginning to whisper conspiratorially. There was one child apart and alone.. the **new girl**. The one with two red plaits and a pale face full of freckles...the one with the "bloody pomme" father and a funny way of talking... sort of "posh". There was talk of why her father was, at his age, not in uniform. A "gutless coward pomme bastard" in fact.

Judith (what sort of name was that ?) didn't know where to go or what to do. She had been through the name calling and red-hair ridicule.. the examination of her food confiscated, sampled and trampled as rubbish. They had long since established she wore her brother's cast off clothing with the buttons on the wrong side of the shirts and coats.. to-day there was an ominous feeling of something big coming her way. Would they tie up her plaits or unravel and ink them. That had been a bad day. Though the welcome gift all wrapped in shiny paper and bow which had contained a dead frog and some dog shit... that was perhaps the worst so far. Perhaps they would just do the usual and literally run rings around her and bounce the netball off her legs back or head.

Ron suddenly turned from the huddle of the group and called Judith to attention. Of course she came as called.. what else could she do.. Ron and Marjorie both towered in rural muscle and flexing adolescence over all the children... this was their last year at school and going into the army was looming as an exciting prospect for Ron if he could escape his father's primary industry exemption.

The toilet was the classic hole in the ground outdoor variety with a wooden seat above and enclosing the hole, and a bin of sawdust beside it for scattering over each major deposit. There were, of course a few patrolling flies and oftentimes resident spiders. History records regular resident snakes and always the green tree frogs tended to be nestling just under the seat. There was no water or basin... these were under the schoolhouse and if you were “fussy” you went up there after your labours to wash... if seen doing this of course you ran the gauntlet of laughter at being a “sissy”.. Judith had long since learnt to retain all her urges till she got home at the end of the school day... that might have had something to do with why she often wet herself when made to stand in front of the class to answer “mental arithmetic”...something that always froze her brain. The blankness behind her eyes and rush of blood to her face were often precursor to a rush in her panties... made by the way from cotton flower bags complete with brand.

The long march began... led by Ron and Marjorie in practice military step, Judith trembling and stumbling as the rest of the mob surrounded and followed. “Down to the Dunny... NOW!” was the command.

The longest walk of my days... I had heard of the torture and rape the Japanese had become renowned for in the war, in the kind of children’s imaginative creative gruesome retelling I won’t commit to paper. My nightmares all carried the all-pervasive fear of the time “the japs are coming” combined with some of these colourful stories.

The dunny door scraped on its rusty hinges as Ron dragged it open...and Judith was dragged into the gloomy interior... no lights in outhouses in those days.

Look... says the chief torturer.. look . go on, bend down and look. She had no idea what I was looking for.

“Can’t you see those drops of piss on the seat ?” He finally shouted.

“You did that...you filthy pomme ... you did that... everyone knows you pomme’s are filthy and only bath once a week too...we know you keep your coal in the bathtub... Everyone by now is in hysterics... this is the funniest “play” they have created in years.

“So... clean it up... go on... lick it up you sissy you... come on ginger top lick it up... yeah yeah carrot head do it”

Yes she did lick that rough wooden seat .. the smell from below filling her nostrils and the flies buzzed around in excitement. The flour bags became very wet . It seemed hours but eventually the bell rang and everyone ran laughing back to the seat of education, the “say no evil, hear no evil see no evil” Miss Green and the scratchy slates and slate pencils. Judith got into quite a bit of trouble for being late back into class, but fortunately Miss Green didn’t know she had no panties on. Her flower bags were now deposited in the hole in the ground, being not only wet but, having served to gather up the shameful vomit on the well cleansed wooden seat over the black hole into hell.

Some 10 years ago, with my very loving and gentle “pomme” husband, a man who had suffered a childhood in English Naval Boarding Schools and the horrors of initiations and bastardization so traditional there and had in fact been instrumental later in life in having them investigated and banned, I went on a trip. We visited “Ourtown” searching out the school and the scene of one of the blackest days of my life. Asking where the school was, we were directed to a local park in what was now a thriving town. There we found nothing but a commemorative stone marking the site of the school, in a truly peaceful tree filled park. Standing there in that shady sanctuary surrounded by birdsong and touched by a sweet gentle breeze, I reflected.

You certainly know you are old when your school is just a commemorative stone.

And oh.. how the mighty have fallen...I laughed.. where are the King and Queen and their bullying brats now ??

“It must feel like this to survivors of wars standing where nature and new life have reconciled the ruins of battle.” I said to my beautiful beloved smiling “Pommie”.

I felt another standing beside me. My own long gone, sweet redhaired freckle faced Pommie father who himself as a child suffered in the same English Boarding School system as a King’s College Cambridge choir boy.

Both these English gentle men are now at rest, but they stand tall in my memory as heroes of another kind of war... survivors of prejudice ... mankind’s blackest and most unjust crime. the invasive roots of Genocide.



About the Author:

Judith Light is a Baha'i, a mother, activist and cornerstone of the Lismore poetic and reconciliation communities. Judith is a nurse and was the matron and owner of 'Currawong Nursing Home' in Ashfield, Sydney for 25 years. During this time, she and her husband Stephen Andrews gave birth to, and raised her five precious daughters. The family moved to the Northern Rivers of NSW and lived on a farm at The Pocket, Billinudgel, giving her children the beauties and joys of country life, horses, bush skills and the seaside – Brunswick to Byron Bay. Judith is now a grandmother and great grandmother of too many to name here, but all loved entirely.

Judith purchased 'Dawson House' and developed a boarding house for TAFE and college students, and rehabilitating addicts. She created 'The Life Resources Exchange' following her divorce. For 10 years the LRE was a Baha'i orientated personal growth and counselling centre for the area. Volunteers ran groups and helped run the centre in exchange for use of the centre's resources.

Judith formed the 'Lismore People for Reconciliation' group and was a member of the first 'Lismore Women's Group' as recommended by head psychiatrist of Richmond Clinic - Dr Harry Freeman (the only person in those days, with any sort of counselling qualifications in the

North Coast area), as recovery from her divorce (from a 25-year marriage with 5 children). With the help of this awesome and welcoming group of 'sisters' and 'peers', she developed a more feminist approach to life, and rediscovered poetry as an expressive outlet of self-discovery and growth. Judith's poetry was encouraged and developed at David Hallett's Lismore Stand Up Poets, where she attended the very first performance and has been attending for 33 years since (and still is at 90).

Judith and the local Baha'i were founding members of the Lismore Lantern Parade. They built and carried the first Bundjalung Goanna lantern (a version of which still leads the parade.) Judith was one of the first presenters on Community radio station River FM 92.9. She ran a Baha'i radio hour, the Life Resources Exchange (LRE) program, and community kaleidoscope for 11 years. One of the most exciting visitors on the programme was a Richard St. Barb Baker, who wrote the book 'Men of the Trees' which led to much conservation of trees and their environment. Richard was a Baha'i.

Along with the Lismore People for Reconciliation Group, Judith formed (with beloved Bundjalung Elders Aunty Faye Smith and Aunty Agnes Roberts- both sadly now departed) the 'VOICES TOGETHER CHOIR' which sang and marched at all the major 'Sorry Days', Reconciliation, NAIDOC and multiple community events. Judith and Bundjalung Elder Faye Smith received various awards including - Bi-Centenary Award 2001, The Australia Day Reconciliation Award 2001, Australia Day Award 2000, NAIDOC Week Indigenous Community Award 2002.

Judith was a founding member of the Lismore Living Library, sharing her journey with interested community members coming to 'read' these unique books – Judith's subjects were- 'Verse and Worse, and the Baha'i Faith'.

Judith owned the Station Laundromat in South Lismore, which she sold to her daughter Vanessa, and sadly all Judith's properties were flood effected across many years. This has not stopped her positive outlook on life. Judith recounts a story by Aunty Faye and Aunty Agnes of Cabbage Tree Island, that was asked of them- 'What do floods mean to you?' Their response with sparkling eyes lit up, in accord, was - 'Food.' The moral being that where many (white) Lismore city dwellers saw loss, the Elders (having little to lose) saw

fun, food and plenty given by the river. Tragically in the 2022 flood; Cabbage Tree Island has been destroyed. But their lesson lives on.

This poetic memoir explores Judith's life and influences through poetry and prose. Her words shape experiences that have formed Judith's Journey to Light.

'My life's search to find truth and justice. Is it true? Is it fair?' (some say her astrological Libran identity influenced her direction)

Judith has written poetry since childhood. Her poetry addresses the searching, yearning journey of a soul reconciling her reality and truth, with the lies and narratives she has confronted during her nine decades on earth.

Isms / Prejudices- (racism, classism, sexism, agism, etc) are the diseases/disabilities that Judith has discovered, and was delighted to find the spiritual antidote to these issues in the Baha'i teachings. (She thanks God for that!)

Judith is delighted to have you join her on this Journey to Light.

Friends, there is an online book version of Journey to Light, where Judith speaks about her journey. You can find all the audio and video recordings at

www.judithalight.com



COMING SOON:

SA & JA ANDREWS

– The story of the marriage, the family, and life at the nursing home...

