

Poems & Stoems[®]

Volume 10



“Amongst the serious ground, the silly can often be found”

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A STOEM® is a Story presented in Poem format

Most of the Poems in this book are stories written in poem format, so most of the works in this book I call **STOEMs**.

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STEVE SIMONS - Like a MACHINE gun of EXPERIENCES
through rhyme if you can take the time, FEEL what's not REAL!

MICROPOEM:

Welcome to the world and work of Steve Simons, the Micro-Poet. I started writing the micro poems as posts in games that I was playing; the posts like Twitter were restricted to something like 140 characters. The challenge being to write something so small; that made sense; had flow; and at times was quite deep. This book brings together some of these posts. Some are serious but most written in fun.

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PART ONE – POEMS & MICROPOEMS

Of weaving words

Of weaving words is surely my art,
to wrap the feelings around the heart,
to bring you in with the simplest of words,
just like a Shepard his flocks to herd.

He who puts thought into small details,
the imagination to capture never fails.

Nothing Safer

Nothing is safer than a secret forgotten,
though of this the keeper may feel rotten,
and the other party suspicious that it has been spoken,
not knowing that it is impossible for it to be broken.

Engaged

A child engaged with a toy,
may be yet another ploy,
as whilst engaged where is the mother?
Could she be with another?

Timeless Tales

Timeless tales in an age of sails.
Ones heart does soar,
wanting more.
If anyone asks what's the score?
Tell them no more.

Storytellers Tales

Working on some of the storytellers tales,
at least those that aren't fails.
Writing em down as folks recall,
won't be as deep or as tall.

Writing in the Dark

Here in the dark I write,
trying not to give myself a fright.
Just enough tension,
meeting with convention.

Setting Sun

Standing here on this bridge,
looking across at the sun setting on the ridge;
like a large gold coin balancing on the hill top;
falling slowly like it'll never stop.

Ashes in my Head

Ashes in my head,
all the words have been said.
The links no longer there,
no creativity to despair.
Tears fail to form,
is this to be my norm?

Random Thoughts

Random thoughts,
brought us as astronauts;
post it notes,
and ditches called moats.
Long live the random thought,
without such creativity our lives would be fraught.

Men!

She sits and stares at the black coffee,
to her her smells like burnt toffee.
Black as her mood, how can she consider food?
The waiter hovers pad and pen in hand,
oh why doesn't he understand?
Not the he waiting an utterance,
but the he who bought this circumstance?
Why is it that men never listen to what is said?
Nothing seems to stay in his head.
He always claims it was something I hadn't said.
Obvious what I meant he could follow the thread.
Why do men have to be so awkward?
They just want to be adored!

Words so wise

Words so wise,
yet they have no eyes,
to see beyond their wisdom is not their task,
remember this and of this don't ask.

Naughty Rat

Well fancy that,
a naughty rat,
wet my table cloth,
ripped it off.
then ran away,
to return another day.

Hanging Basket

When bought it looked swish,
like a rather fancy gourmet dish.

When I got it home what happened?
Did it feel it didn't blend?

I fed and watered it just like advised.
Here am I feeling surprised,

As the basket fitting its name,
it's a hanging basket looking a shame.

The wind roars

The wind roars,
Thinking I'll soon be outdoors,
facing it like an invincible foe.
Do I really have to go?
Things tumble down the road,
as if there a river flowed.
The wind roars,
the clock implores,
to be battered like a weeping willow,
do I really have to go?
The clock unforgivably advances,
not caring about my circumstances.
Another glance and I know,
I really do have to go.

Music

Music pattern forming,
The notes swarming.
Expectation develops,
The whole experience envelopes.
Then curve ball,
Composer throws in their all.
The music jumps,
Expectation it dumps.
New pattern to build upon,
Nothing like an automaton.
Keeping us upon our toes,
For where next no-one knows.

A Bear's Timetable

She asks "So what do you do at school?"

Bear replies "Well keep to the timetable as a rule."

"Yes, yes, but what things are in that?"

"There is nothing in it as it is quite flat."

"Oh bear you silly thing what is on it then?"

"See what you mean, it is words written in pen."

"What do those words actually say?"

"When it's time to work and play."

"Do you do subjects like history?"

"Well of course but some is a real mystery."

"Oh Bear what do you mean?"

"On geo graphic I'm not keen."

"Geography is that the word?"

"No pictures of places, absurd!"

"My favourite you see is Wednesday we have Double Picnics;

when packing our baskets we get up to all sorts of tricks."

"Double picnics? That sounds great."

"Oh it is I can tell you it is first rate!"

Once we hid a glove with a spring,
You have never seen such a glorious thing!

When our teacher lifted the lid,

So frightened she ran and hid!”

“What other things do you enjoy.”

“ Climbing trees a must for every girl and boy.”

“Think I would very much like that.”

“Then in history we have to name the hat.”

“Name the hat? Seems a strange thing to do.”

“That depends on your point of view.

For each hat belonged to a famous bear,
And often an interesting tale lives there.”

“Do you do counting and sizes of things?”

“Oh yes we did that last year caught my paw in some rings.”

“Rings? What were you doing with those?”

“Well purple bear tried to put some on his nose.

He ran out of luck,

Got rather stuck;

So I tried to help,

got stuck with a yelp.”

Thud

Whilst doing building work,

I felt like a complete jerk,

As I stepped back,

Only to find that I lack,

Solid ground to stand upon,

As my foot found a phenomenon,

It is strangely known as slippery mud,

So upon the ground to land with a thud!

Some unwritten Clause

Should a petal fall every time you weep?
Should I loose sleep,
though I not be the cause,
my life on pause,
some unwritten clause?

Your smile like the rays of the sun,
reminding me of long lost fun.
Of sand beneath my toes,
of a sandcastle that grows and grows.

As I sit upon my chair,
At the wall I stare,
Nothing for me to see,
But I have lost the who is me.

What once seemed important now is lost,
What a terrible amount it has cost.
What once was prized has no value to me,
for I no longer understand it you see.

Hot Air Ballon

Hot air balloon,
roaring like a bassoon,
the silently rising in the night,
gracious in its ascending flight.
Bringing the sights for us to see,
and to make us really feel free.

The Nappy Years

Gas mask dear
Oh no this one is green
I think a stalk can be seen,
Did he have spinach?

When you are in them they never seem yo end,
the nappy years can drive you round the bend.
Then comes the challenge of potty training,
now that can be as equally draining.
So much easier when you can put them to bed,
without all that nagging inside your head.

Now I look at others involved in this trist,
reminds me that the nappy years still exist.
Just so glad that isn't me,
making what seemed an eternal plea,
"when will this end?"
Its driving me round the bend!"

My love for you

My love for you knows no bounds,
My love for you has little sounds.
My words not opulent and fancy,
But then you were never over romancy.
Supportive and loving it is true,
A partnership that is fast as glue.
The path together has been no picnic,
But being there for each other seems to be the trick.
Appreciation of everything you do,
And remembering every so often telling too.

Kingston Lacy

A place where time flows no more, clock stopped at a ten to four.

A house and estate to be enjoyed,
it's purpose redeployed.

Rooms to viewed,
With history imbued.

No longer a place lived in,
But a clear picture of what has been.

Then in the attic rooms a surprise,
A delight for the eyes.

For this is one of those rare places,
Which brings delight to the visitors faces.

For convention it circumvents,
As two rooms that look like tents.

Then in the grounds there are yet more surprises,
Resulting from their owners travel one surmises.

Bringing a sense of peace is a Japanese garden,
Even the Egyptian objects one can pardon.

A visit to this place, is well worth your time.

Even though the stable clock does no longer chime.

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## Leaves

Leaves to fall,  
giving their all,  
their goodness to return to the ground,  
falling without sound.

Colours so bright.

Feels just right.

## Brownsea Island

A place where for enterprise it was bought,  
But such faith was overwrought.  
A place where scouting began,  
Where children laughed and ran.  
A place where squirrels of red,  
All seem to be still in bed.  
A place where visitors come to see,  
Somewhere that in time frozen to be.  
A place so close to the mainland,  
Yet still in high demand.

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Our moods

The winds of change,
our lives to rearrange,
to keep us on our toes,
for everyone knows,
therein our creativity grows.

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## The Test

The eyes are the windows of the soul,  
that is what they say on the whole.  
What if there is none there?  
should we really care?  
the face looked so real,  
the expressions looked the deal.  
something I couldn't put my finger upon,  
told me that that this was a con.  
Yes he or it talked with conviction,  
the body movements had me like an addiction.  
Something was just not right.  
Knew I couldn't put up a fight,  
at least until I knew for sure.  
Now that would be a cure.  
AI, robot or some other name,  
didn't matter for that wasn't the game.  
To fool and convince,  
to not make the recipient wince.  
To leave the room with absolute conviction,  
that would make for their benediction.  
It was good but something was not quite right.  
Couldn't put my finger on what gave me that strong insight.  
The text received the next day,  
took any doubts away.



## A man with words

A Man Good with words,  
can charm like the birds.  
To take your heart to differing heights,  
also to bring other delights.  
Time for you to freak,  
then no longer does speak.

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My Bear Lost His Voice

My bear lost his voice,
Not through my or his choice.
He used to be my best friend,
Thought that would never end.
We talked about lots of silly things,
He still loves sitting on the swings.
Dad never comes home any more.
they tried to tell me the score,
but I just don't understand,
as Dad no longer comes to hold my hand,
on visits to the hospital.
Makes me feel rather brittle.
Like something in me wants to break.
I don't know how much of the silence I can take.
My bear has lost his voice,
definitely not my choice.

Zero

For days just drifting
The scene no longer shifting.
When does new, stop being new,
When does the fascinated you, stop being that hue?
Floating through uncharted space,
No longer a fascinating place.
Ever to see a human face?

A nervous start,
With much bravery and heart.
The technology all shinny and new.
Hoping it will do what it was designed to.
We conducted exhaustive tests.
Such dedication one invests.
Knowing not if to succeed,
But such is our creed.

Satisfied with our work,
Though knowing still faults could lurk.
Upon the adventure I was sold,
Though I knew it to be lonely and cold.
Nothing to beat the human explorer,
As the best information restorer.
I had such hopes of success,
bought by all the hype I guess.
Now to end my days in space,
Even worse the loss of grace.
To be classed as a hero,
or a soon to be forgotten zero?

I Love Trees

I love trees,
much can be said of these,
much variety do they bring,
of their praises I could sing.
Straight and tall,
knobbly and small.

Their leaves providing shelter,
creatures darting helter skelter.
Their fruits and seeds,
providing for our needs.
Then there is the wood,
crafted to look incredibly good.

Mighty and towering above,
neighbour to the foxglove.
Bringing character to our landscape,
adding body and shape.
I love trees,
they could bring me to my knees.

Tomb on a Hill

It is said,
or so I read,
that the tomb so small,
stands amidst trees not very tall,
on a small hill,
where the air is strangely still.
A peaceful contrast to the death,
when the creature took its last breath.

An alien life it was believed to be,
but from the pictures unclear to me.
The crash had occurred quite close by.
The craft was seen to fly,
or so the reports read.
The creature found dead.
From where it had come?
A data vacuum to succumb.

Here lies a suspected alien visitor,
who's origin is obscure.
Whatever the purpose of visit,
may it now be requisit,
that they lie here in peace,
as from all strife achieved release.

Sky

Such a reward,
especially if bored,
to look into the sky,
how time does fly.
The serenity it brings,
makes the heart sing.

Night Sky

Dark, majestic sky,
description trying to defy.
Moon hiding behind a cloud,
no longer looking proud.
Silhouetted black trees,
solid against gentle breeze.
Clouds of orange and pink hues,
set against a sea of dark blues.
A sight of much wonder,
as I observe what lies yonder.

Aquarium

Darkened room,
in the gloom,
a glass tank I can see,
bright as can be,
its treasures to behold,
far more exciting than gold.

Start of the Day

A definite chill,
the air still,
the sunshine rather weak,
not that this early I should do a critique.

Living

Feel free to LAUGH
feel free to CRY
For if we do NEITHER
we surely DIE?

Family

As the family grows,
what they can achieve, who knows?
Protected by each other's love,
connected like feathers of a dove.

Pond

Peaceful pond,
something to respond,
tail flashing,
water splashing,
trail of gold,
a sight to behold.
All gone,
brief liaison.

Perception

Does the real me,
see what the eye does see?
Is something of me added along the way?
Perception is in the eye of the brain some say.
So I colour my own world,
with limitless brushes unfurled?
Let my imagination go free,
for is that not the real me?

My Poetry

You love my poetry,
but not as much as me.
Though it may seem trite,
of my feelings and
observations I love to write.

Wolf

Wolf may be the costume,
but the wearer may not assume,
that their demeanour be the same,
though that be the aim of the game.
Unless the wearer be a good actor,
they may not be such a benefactor.

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## PART TWO – STOEMS®



### Of Concern

Having only just moved to the town,  
delighted that I found it at the hill crown,  
the place that I was seeking,  
of the junior school I am speaking.  
I wish I had come earlier today,  
For there was a cold wind at play.  
It was also getting quite dark.  
I'm thinking coming here each day a lark.  
For that steep hill to climb,  
I'm going to need to allow plenty of time.  
What a silly place to build a school,  
I wonder the aim of the builder, the fool.  
I finally reach the gate,  
it's definitely getting late.  
The school yard looks quite deep,  
The building beyond looks asleep;  
Dark and foreboding.  
The bars before me eroding.  
I hope in the daylight it does not seem so run down.  
This building stands so proud and tall above the town.



I turn, nothing more for me to learn.  
For my new home I now yearn.  
A quarter down the hill,  
I suddenly find myself still.  
I glance over my shoulder,  
Such a vision am I the beholder.  
For there standing at the school gates,  
A dark figure who's lack of detail frustrates.  
I turn and again climb the hill,  
My curiosity I have to fulfil.  
When I again at the gates I arrive,  
An explanation I am unable to contrive,  
for the figure has gone.  
I left wondering at the goings-on.

Several weeks later and set in my new routine,  
I found myself having the most strangest of dream.  
There in Victorian dress,  
Looking neat not a mess,  
Is a woman with a child on each side,  
In fact one from me is trying to hide.  
Her face quite a picture of care yet calm,  
I get the feeling that the children will come to no harm.  
They walk along a crowded street.  
The children also looking prim and neat.  
No purpose has this dream,  
At least that's how it does seem.  
Yet it repeated through the night,  
Nothing about it to give a fright.

The next day,  
as it is life's way,  
I dropped my son off to school,  
Not usually having time to chat as a rule.  
I was pleasantly surprised,  
Upon my dress so prized,  
the lady to my left complimented me,  
then invited me to join her for a cup of tea.  
So off to the tea shop down the hill.  
About the children we chatted at will.  
The tea a welcoming sight,  
Then we talked of my dream that night.

At first I thought she was playing a game,  
Martha, for that was her name,  
told of a rumour of long past,  
in which a mother's fate was miscast.  
The mother had done the same as us two,  
Dropped her children off at school as we do.  
It was said that her thoughts were elsewhere,  
And that for her safety she gave not a care.  
She stepped into the road and was run down by a carriage.  
At inquest a pure accident declared, but of her husband  
some disparage.  
A faint rumour persisted,  
That her husband twisted.  
Of this it was said,  
he wished her dead.  
Believed that a plan he conceived,  
Further of those he inter-weaved.

The children were sent away to boarding school,  
An act so wrong in time and so awfully cruel.  
Of them little was then heard,  
The husband's cruelty undeterred,  
Took another wife and his earlier children he disowned.  
Financially by a trust fund they were zoned.  
Martha said that she once she had such a collision,  
As myself and had herself seen the same vision.  
It is believed that the mother will not rest,  
Until with sight of her children's well being she is blessed.

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Too late

Before now I didn't care,
But then I saw her black hair.
Silky, low,
Swaying to and fro.
Find I just cannot look away,
But when she turns my eyes stray.
Feeling myself going red,
There could be no words said.

Finding myself like on auto pilot,
walking away like I cared not a jot;
whether her face was equally hot,
and whatever else she has got.
Only later was I to discover,
that she was like no other.

I admired from afar,
like a shy fan of a movie star.
She certainly drew attention of the other guys.
Though she didn't fall for their boasts and lies.
It seemed like I was still in with a chance.
If only I could overcome my shyness and gain her romance.

Then came the day when she met James,
The sports fan who was good at all the games.
He said the right things,
Apparently pulling her heart strings.
I watched from the wings,
Whilst James pushed her on the swings.
Every time their eyes met,
Their love I was unable to forget.

Then he started to treat her mean,
She cried and on that I wasn't keen.
Being the class weakling,
There was no relief that I could bring.
All I could do was frustratedly watch,
attack I planned but feared I'd botch.
Then one day overjoyed I heard,
something that at first seemed absurd.

The news was that James had dumped,
Yes that's right their relationship gazumped!
Face covered in her dark silky hair,
Oh to approach but I couldn't dare.
Others took my rightful place,
Eventually putting a smile on her face.

Another took James's place,
But after time was just as much a disgrace.
The shouting could clearly be heard.
Even with this, to her defence I couldn't be spurred.
My fear of being rejected just too high.
The inevitable split was being headed towards by and by.
I wondered who would come next,
And whether she would end up similarly vexed.

Why is it some people are always attracted to the wrong
un's?
Like a movie that has multiple reruns.
For time after time this pattern repeated,
Though after each she had retreated.
I made my chat up line,
But all did not go fine.
For quickly was I rejected,
feeling hurt and dejected.
I had just been too late,
to pursue her for my date.

Convinced myself that she was the wrong one,
and it was her loss that me she should shun.

Of her I soon forgot,
even when her voice was in earshot.
Kept busy in the years after school,
Now well beyond all that ridicule.
Out with some mates,
They with their dates,
we were all having fun.
When I was noticed by someone,
She asked if she knew me from somewhere,
It was when she said her name was Claire,
that the recognition finally kicked in,
but I didn't want to return to that chagrin.

So pretended I didn't know,
Hoping my lies didn't show.
She continued to chat and got onto our work and likes.
Claire was apparently now into films and bikes,
the former as she was a critic and the latter the cycling kind.
To get involved with Claire now I was still not inclined.
I remained quite diplomatic,
Not wanting to be at all dramatic.
My mates announced they wanted to move on,
So shortly after that we were gone.

To see Claire again for some time I was not,
glad not to be entangled in all that wasn't to be got.
When I next did see Claire,
She was sat on her own playing with her hair.
She looked so innocent and sweet,
Not like one who you'd wish harm or defeat.
She looked up with such a smile,
One that I would have wanted for a quite a while.
Wondering what had changed her stance,

Was this for me a good or bad happen-stance?

Softly Claire said, "I know who you were."
A strange statement too vague for me to concur.
"I wish I had taken notice of you then.
For you were and probably still are my kind Ben.
Too shy to make any approaches,
Not strong enough to resist others encroaches.
How I could have been so mean,
When finally you declared you were keen.
I was still hurting you see,
Can you ever forgive me?

I realise that I was really a fool,
When I started at school,
I just went for sportsman like good looks,
Not someone kind, caring and into books.
How much I have missed,
Wondering what it would be like if we ever....
At that point I didn't wait for any further cue,
I leaned in and kissed her good and true.
The end of this story I wouldn't have a clue,
I wonder did you?

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## A Thing So Simple

See his poor swollen face,  
to hear him struggle for breath, disgrace.

I blame myself,  
not to put me on that shelf,  
that is what the specialist said.  
His face so red.

Laying helpless in the hospital bed.  
The doctors believed he was next to dead.

How could we let this take place?  
His sense of worth and freedom we embrace,  
but increased risk comes with this,  
that fact you cannot dismiss.

I blame myself,  
there I go that shelf!

We had visited friends,  
the excited chatter never ends.  
Glad to share,  
others company who care.



He only wanted to go to the toilet,  
seemed so safe and yet,  
how were any of us to know?  
There it is again the doubt of although!

A thing so simple as this,  
could shatter our bliss.

Toilet cleaner was our downfall.  
Of all things him to enthrall.

Apparently fascinated by the patterns of blue,  
he must have put a hand down the loo.  
Then into his mouth and eyes,  
curious as to what it did comprise.

Our friends not knowing,  
he was likely to do the foregoing.  
Easy to assume that as our children age,  
they would naturally learn and turn the page;  
Not to repeat behaviours when young,  
Things to be sampled by their mouth and tongue.

A thing so simple as this,  
Could shatter our bliss.

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Against what I was Taught

Standing here,
Feeling rather queer.
After all it's not my house,
Being as quiet as the quietest mouse,
Feeling like an absolute louse.
After all it's not my house.
The triumph of picking the lock,
Then on entering taking stock,
Knowing I am on dodgy ground,
Hence not making any sound.
The fear of getting caught,
Knowing its against what I was taught.
This being someone else's domain,
adds to my strain.

It all seemed like fun,
When shown by the one,
Who boasted he could pick any lock.
I was carried along and didn't take stock.
Any consequences didn't cross my mind.
So in this predicament myself to find.
Standing in someone else's living room,
Filled with an enormous sense of gloom.
Electrical devices with their maze of wire.
If in a store these would inspire.
Instead I am loathed to interfere.
I should treat them as a new frontier.
Unplugging the wires as fast as I can,
Like working to some unseen plan.
Treat them as boxes of treats.
Not something that defeats.

Keeping the noise down,
Feeling a right clown.
Like I'm on a contest show,
Someone who appears to be in the know.

Carefully the boxes I stack near the door.
When complete, for money and other valuables I look for.
This feeling now more like a game,
not to be caught being my aim.
Deep into my search,
I didn't notice the door lurch.
I jumped when the light came on.
This event like a strange phenomenon.

From a state of being assured,
to my life becoming unsecured.
For there he does stand,
the deadly gun in hand.
He said "There is no doubt as to your intent,
My anger at this I could vent,
With this gun your life could quickly be spent.
So please can any more unnecessary upset we prevent?"

I had objects in hand,
all I could do is stand.
I found myself not wanting to move,
or do anything else he'd disapprove,
yet I didn't want this latest item to drop.
So I looked at the item then at the table top.
"Don't do anything dodgy,
keep your hands where I can see."
Nervously, I gently place the object down,
retrieving my hands slow so I don't cause a frown.
Suddenly from behind the man comes a sound,
Does this my circumstances even more compound?

“I have called the police John.”
As she walked forward to join this dangerous liaison,
I suddenly recognised her face,
Though I wouldn't have associated it with this place;
for it was Sarah's Mum “Mrs Smith?”
He replied, “Stop this forthwith!
Jess, why the hell the police did you call?”
She replies “How was I to know this us to befall?”
Then to me she asks, “Why are you doing this my dear?”
On that point I am totally unclear.
What is Sarah's mum doing here?
He says “Look I do not want to interfere,
But do you know this young lady?”
She replies, “Yes she has not always been this shady.”

“Perhaps you had best ring the police and tell them you
made a mistake.”
So she rings only to find that it isn't exactly a piece of cake.
She explains to us that the police would still call to make
sure all was well.
The man he isn't exactly happy at this news I can tell.

We set about hurriedly putting the room right.
Working together well to solve our joint plight.
Just ad we have finished and all is looking good,
The door bell sounds as we know it would.
The man tells me to sit in one of the chairs,
“Just look like you haven't any cares.”
Jess sits in a chair opposite me.
The concern on her face is clear to see.
It is like the look my mother would make,
Oh don't drag up that heartbreak!

Why of all the houses did I have to pick this one?
I wanted some excitement, but this time I'm overrun.
What are the chances of stumbling upon Sarah's mum?
Mind you with all this fancy stuff he sure has to have some
income!
Not something to be thinking with a police visit pending,
I'm just wondering how this will all be ending?

Doorbell rings and John answers with a cheery voice,
mind you it's not like he has any other choice.
The officers are invited in.
Keep calm, no tailspin.
I let John and Jess do the talking,
no point in me ruining things by squawking.

John explains that it was a simple mistake on Jess's part,
That I'm his niece and she's his tart.
Sorry the last is my imagination running away with me.
Still caught up in all the tension of my situation is my plea.
...So Jess thought with John's raised voice that it was a
robbery.

One of the officers is taking notes,
for sympathy we seem to have his votes.
The other is snooping around,
like a sniffing blood hound,
convinced there is more to this..... he stops...than meets
the eye.
He states that he has just spotted something that is curious
and does mystify.
He asks why all the cables are on the floor all strewn.
He adds that while John's explanation is logical this obser-
vation it does impugn.

He picks up one of the boxes, turns it over in his hands,
Until upon a small label to the rear his eye lands.
Upon reading the details thereupon,
He declares that he needs an explanation,
As to why John and Jess appear to be in possession,
of equipment that was someone else's obsession.
John puts forward some defence,
But the officer claims there's still an offence.

The note taking officer resumes asking questions,
My age, name, address, work, shoe size, any other sugges-
tions?

Jess also suffers the same routine.

He radios the information to someone called Maurine.

The officer who discovered the unplugged kit,

Turns his attention from John to us all, here comes the hit.

He says, "OK folks don't know what the game is here but
honesty is needed."

A moment's silence, then Jess says "Kirsty is not John's
niece." To this John conceded.

Jess continues, "She is my daughter's friend,

Though after tonight's escapade I don't know if that will
end."

How is it that mothers can deviate like this,

a long term friendship in a matter of seconds to dismiss?

"We heard a noise down here and John came down to
check it out,

from what I heard there was little doubt,

that a robbery was taking place,

before things picked up a pace,

I thought I should ring the police."

The other officer says, "Thanks but how did this kit get
here?"

He nodded towards the gear, his voice sounding severe.

Later

John lost his kit, and that was the end of it.
As for me, well you see, first offence, whilst no defence,
apart from picking the lock, which found me in the dock.
No damage had I done, and of charges John had raised
none.

The police however insisted on pursuing me,
looking back I'm glad they did you see,
as the community service I actually enjoyed.
For my confidence it actually buoyed.
Jess has been a rock, as my life I took stock.
She helped me get some voluntary work,
At first taking unpaid work I felt a burke.
It lead to a permanent job, all because of the place I de-
cided to rob.
Jess and John got married after seeing Sarah off to univer-
sity.
To think that all this came from such perversity.

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## Repeat

Dark, tired, going a bit fast;  
Wondering how much longer the journey would last.  
Suddenly from nowhere he was there:  
trying to avoid me, but with that stare.  
How I missed him I just don't know.  
Car stopped, yet no sign of a torso.  
I searched up and down the road,  
Torch in hand but nothing showed.

Dilemma now, to report, or try to forget?  
To my car no sign of a hit and yet...  
the guilt plays upon my mind,  
how life can be so unkind.  
I had not asked for this to occur,  
nothing wicked within me to stir.  
I merely had a very long day,  
wishing it to end and my head down to lay.  
Hoping the guy would be alright,  
knowing I can't search all night.  
My journey home to resume.  
The rest of the journey spent in gloom.

A number of months passed,  
whilst it had not been a blast,  
there had been no repercussions,  
nothing on the news or police discussions.  
The guy from that dreadful night,  
Must have escaped and been alright.  
Happen-stance, I had to take the same route home,  
this time accompanied as I didn't want to be thrown,  
by memories of the previous encounter emerging.  
As upon that same place we were converging,  
with a great feeling of apprehension I was overcome,



Whether emotion or replayed memory I was undone.  
For the self same event occurred again.  
Was this guy playing some game or some trick of my brain?

Having searched again for any sign,  
I spotted something under my torches shine;  
not the guy or anything connected with him,  
but multiple skid marks on the road nothing more grim.  
This proved the guy was either a practical joker,  
or maybe this is something not so mediocre.

Several weeks later I had a chance to test my theories.  
Sure enough the same events confirmed the series.  
From the sequence I ascertained,  
it was more ghostly than someone unconstrained.  
one further encounter confirmed my finding,  
my stress and tension I found unwinding.

Two months later I had a car full of tanked up mates,  
they were edging me on to speed such being their traits.  
Sure enough there ahead,  
in the road a figure not met with dread.  
She turned, her face filled with fear.  
I hit the brake, but it was clear,  
Nothing I could do, would avoid the collision.  
The event cut through my heart like a precise incision.

I find myself in jail,  
Unbelieving, unable to wail.  
Bitterly sorry for what I had done,  
Deeply regretful for what I had become.  
How could I have been so desensitised,  
now by the public so despised.

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The man with...

He stared into his almost empty glass,
As if he had reached an impasse.
Having nothing else to do,
I asked "Mind if I join you?"
He shook his head,
His eyes a glassy red.
Striking up conversation,
But not wanting to cause vexation,
I asked if he came from around here?
At first he continued to stare into his beer,
Then said he was from far of parts.
Though no expert in these arts,
I detected his accent was from another place,
Something I could not have deduced from his face.
He took me by surprise,
As he engaged me with his eyes;
"A place of green rolling meadows,
it's beauty encourages use of prose.
With a place like that as your life's start,
You'll want to share what's in your heart.
For all my days I have travelled to many places,
Put smiles on many different faces.
Told tales that raise the hairs on the back of any neck.
Tales such as these have been my paycheque."

I asked "paycheque? How is this so?"
"I would tell these wherever I would go.
In return the listeners would buy me drink or food;
even a bed, but I wouldn't want that misconstrued.
I once spent several days in a Royal Palace.
Of this I tell you not out of any malice.
The King had heard of my tales,
he wanted to hear them over some fine ales.
I stayed not just for a night,

But a week without fright.
When it came to the time for me to leave,
The King insisted that the best transport I receive.
A coach encrusted with gold,
On such travel I could be sold.

Soon after that I took a ride in a the gondola of a balloon.
That was a ride that ended too soon!
For we headed for a mountain range,
The the steering went all strange.
We crashed in the wild,
of the mountain side.
It took us two weeks to descend,
it was nearly a very unhappy end.
For we we were pursued by bears,
initially we managed to keep at bay with flares.
As the days got old,
those bears got even more bold.
With our last ounce of strength,
Having kept them at length,
We gladly came upon a farm,
the owner of which protected us from harm.

Then there was another life threatening trip,
this one aboard a large cargo carrying ship.
The captain of which was quite taken by my tales,
Though he had some of his own involving whales.
For on some of his journeys he had witnessed a few;
Said these magnificent creatures you just had to view.
The place for which he was bound,
Had an equally magnificent sound,
Though its name I quite forgot,
Especially as to its arrival was never the upshot.
For two days out to sea,
Was nearly the undoing of me.

For out of rain a storm suddenly arose,
and of our rudder it managed to dispose.
The engine whilst quite shaken,
could at least his engineer reawaken.
With no way for us to steer,
The whole journey became queer.
The navigator plotted a course that would take us to land,
but as we couldn't change our direction we were in fate's
hand.
Heading into deeper seas,
Nothing taking heed of our pleas.

We headed like this for several days,
but even with this our captain would not faze.
Determined that we would reach land,
As if to be steered by a greater hand.
There was a sign, for we spotted a whale spout.
The whole crew gave a joyous shout.
On the following day the waves rose and the wind direction
changed.
Our course as a result was miraculously rearranged.
After two days we were spotted by another ship,
They towed us to complete our trip."

"Wow what an incredible person you are,
you have travelled so much and so far.
Met so many people who's lives you have enriched,
But tell me why do you now look so down and ditched?"
"Ah that my friend,
is caused by a truth that catches us all in the end."
"Of what truth do you speak?"
"One that I did not seek,
for last night a man accused me of being a downright liar,
as the story I told would not stand the test of a fire.
As it was the fruit of my imagination,

in truth I was not to have any salvation,
for his claim was true,
my credibility was overdue.
I must confess I did not defend myself,
Which kind of left me deflated upon life's shelf.”
“What matters the view of this one man?
With all of the riches that you bought to life's plan?
Did you ever purport your own tales to be the truth?”
“I would never want to be so aloof.”
“Your value my friend is the joy that you bring.
Of life's rich tapestry your voice does sing.
Take heed not of the doubters of your art,
instead of your audience's enjoyment take heart.”

Never have I seen a man smile so much.
The man with a thousand stories and a magic touch.

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## Satnav

I just had to buy one,  
as my Millie was gone.  
Millie my wife,  
never trouble or strife.  
Millie knew how to get places,  
with ability to follow map traces.  
Now that Millie was no longer here,  
I had to invest in some satnav gear.  
Whilst at first with it I struggled,  
I soon got into the habit with it smuggled,  
in the car's glove compartment.  
It was as if my car now had map reading department.

Used to having someone with whom to chat,  
at first my life seemed to be really flat.  
Then with the satnav I started the routes to discuss,  
I would even on occasions get annoyed and cuss.  
Then as the time went on,  
I'd conduct a more chatty liaison.  
We would talk about the weather,  
recalling where we had been together.  
What things we had seen,  
on routes that we were not keen.

Then one day,  
an email came my way,  
which notified of an upgrade,  
so connection to my computer made.  
The process was easy to effect,  
gaining the makers respect.  
The result was astounding,  
giving new grounding.

For now my Satnav talks back,  
no longer a conversation slack.  
When first she replied,  
my sanity I denied!  
As the time progressed,  
With her conversation I was impressed.  
As places we had visited and she recalled,  
with the whole experience I was enthralled.  
Anyone listening would be equally intrigued.  
Our journeys are never fatigued.  
Just for a mystery to unravel,  
we often travel.

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The Unexpected

I was feeling down,
couldn't even find a frown.
Routine test the doctor said,
won't even need to get in bed.
To the hospital on a bus,
Me mam didn't she make a fuss?
Wanted me dad to drive me down,
Now that would make him frown.

The waiting was the thing that got me.
I can't do all that hanging around like a tree.
My phone soon ran out of battery,
So no games to entertain me.
Tried to watch the TV,
But no sound you see.
Can't do with reading all them words.
So instead watched out the window them birds.
There on the grass was three tits,
Squabbling over sandwich bits.
When my bird lost the chase,
this game I could no longer embrace.

The tests themselves went alright,
They said for the results I had to hold tight.
Surgery would give me a call,
Looking forward to an end of it all.
I decide that lunch is now called for,
I see a sign 'café' on a nearby door.
The place is quite small but neat and clean,
No-one at the counter to be seen.
As I don't like decisions to hurry.
I like the look of the curry,

But I'm only really looking for a snack.
So the sandwiches and rolls I look back.

Purchases finally on my tray,
towards hot drinks I make my way.
That is when of someone behind the counter I am aware.
What first strikes me is her long back hair,
Draped over her left shoulder and shining there.
I look down at the name badge and see Claire.
I look up at her face and feel myself blush,
As she asks if I want a drink I feel I mustn't rush.
Otherwise I'm likely to get tongue tied.
Luckily the list of drinks I'd earlier spied.

Drink ordered without a hitch.
Claire scanned the cake and sandwich,
Her perfume subtle yet enticing,
Add to this her smile, the icing.
Claire turns to make my drink,
My eyes follow and I cannot help but think,
Her body so perfect in every sway.
I know I shouldn't be thinking this way.
She could be married or engaged,
wouldn't want partner enraged.

I pay, grab my tray, find myself a seat.
Claire cleans the next table then seems indiscreet,
As she takes every by surprise and sits at my table,
Reaches down and pushes some paper under a leg to
make it stable.
"Sorry it would only annoy,
after all I want you to enjoy."
Her smile so innocent and true.
Then she pulls off a bit of a coup,
"So what brings you to the hospital?"
The question genuine, not to belittle.

I am somewhat disarmed,
Yet by the question feeling unharmed.
It's more one of care,
Rather than a dare.

This sort of question I dread,
But I tell her what the doctor had said.
“Sounds like they are taking good care of you.
So what do you do?”
“About what?” I cheekily ask.
“Hmm you're not gonna be a bit of a task?”
“A task you say, seems that it's kinda the other way.”
She smiles like she has met a match and protests “hey,
hey!
can't a girl take an interest in a fellow bean?”
My turn to smile as her humour I'd seen.

Each time the hospital I had visited she would be there,
I came to think of her as my Claire.
This time I thought it was time to take things up a notch.
I had no feeling of nerves or fear of a botch.
As I just handed Claire the concert tickets and asked,
“How about the the 14th, will I in your company be basked?”
“A little forward young man,
but let me consult my diary, oh yes I can.”

Glad that the treatment had been a success.
Now there is something else I should address.
Lunch in town with my favourite girl.
With a serious sense of my life to unfurl.
Waiting outside the café looking chilled to the bone,
Seems to be occupied with her mobile phone.
She looks up and I see the familiar smile.
One that I'd glad walk for many a mile.
Arm in arm we walk into the café.
Automatically I grab a tray.

Our food is easy to pick,
At this I am now quite slick.
At quiet corner we sit.
Am I nervous? Not a bit.
“So Claire, what are you doing with the rest of your life?
I wondered if in June you’d like to become my wife?”
“What marry you? Wow that would be some coup.
Are you sure that’s a genuine question?”
“Well its more of a plea than a suggestion.”
Claire smiles, takes my hand,
leans in kisses me and makes me feel grand,
I say, “I’ll take that as a yes.”
Claire replies, “A fair guess.”

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Feedback welcome: [steve@STOEMS.co.uk](mailto:steve@STOEMS.co.uk)

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