

Mercy

&

Meditations

Kingsley L Dennis

‘There is one thing in the world that should not be forgotten. You may forget everything except that one thing, without there being any cause for concern. If you remember everything else but forget that one thing, you will have accomplished nothing. It would be like a king who sends you to a village on a specific mission. You go and perform a hundred other tasks. If you neglect to accomplish the task for which you were sent, it is as though you did nothing. *Man therefore has come into the world for a specific purpose and aim. If he does not fulfill that purpose, he does nothing.*’

Rumi

With the drawing of this Love and the voice of this Calling

*We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.*

T. S. Eliot

*In your light I learn how to love.
In your beauty, how to make poems.*

*You dance inside my chest,
where no one sees you,*

*but sometimes I do, and that
sight becomes this art.*

Rumi

Dedication

Perhaps these are not poems. Or will not be seen as such.

They are expressions, droplets, tiny explosions that sing of a more silent voice behind.

And they have a different taste from some of my earlier work. They came quickly. Yet as always they are words of the moment, left uncrafted and marked by their time of birth.

Often what I have to say is the same thing, said over and over again in countless ways. Again, this is my unfathomable muse. This is where I am going to.

I make no apologies for the seeming lack of poetry in my poetry. My speaking now has become more toned-down, less prosaic and garnished. Often I wish to write no more than a word, an open mouth: a look.

I am thankful for the support the cosmos has given me. I wonder what will be my real labour. Whatever, I have already promised to pay the price.

May we all arrive where we started, and know the place for the first time. Amen.

Dedicated to the memory of Syed Omar Ali-Shah Naqshband

Kingsley L. Dennis, Wednesday, 21 September 2005

With the desires of one

The pleasure we take in ourselves
Is the pleasure we take from the world:

Like two instruments engaged in the same event,
Reflected images from the same mirror;

We entangle ourselves in a world made of two,
With the desires of one.

Nothing is between me and thee,
Nor you and I.

What we imagine is, or becomes to be,
Like a conjured illusion

Yet made real in a realm where we
Make our own separations.

The pleasure of our loves can only grow
As we make our mark upon the world.

There is no wrong in our adventure except
The fear of our embrace,

Or cowardice in our stride: to not leave behind
All that we failed to meet in a lifetime.

18.45
15.1.05

I am that

Walking through old foreign streets in snow,
chilled and vacuous, like the deserted town square;

the city pours around me, yet I perceive only that
which the senses choose for me. Prison-like

in this body I stare. We are children of stars,
made of the stuff from beauteous supernova.

What splendour, I think, as I move through the
spaces of open retreat, going nowhere.

Marvellous flight of the fusion-aviator;
missionary pilgrim of curious delight:

I travel light, for I am that.

23.28

20.1.05

Into the mystic

Losing the battle of life;
sliding into the booze of a beloved
not yet found.

A career move grounded in faith,
hampered by aspirations.

Now that reality is a sea of quarks
that bounce between the here and there,
in the simultaneity of the same moment,

losing one's footing in the solid, concrete
now is no longer the magnificent shock

it once purported to be. Into the mystic
of the everyday mundane. Soon the vacuum
of our new realities will eclipse the old talk,

the fossil thought of tortured beings fighting
with tooth and claw for social gain.

The time to move on up: our next phase
upon us increasingly so, egging us on to
go into the new terrestrial terrain to gaze

upon the next stage. Wondering why it took
so much to mend our ways of mind.

12.16
21.1.05

Nature

I do not know what I can do
to make a mark upon the world;
this unaccomplishment
disables me,

yet reminds me that I, you, us,
are an unfinished project,
evolving still to be.
This nature nurtures me.

21.30
26.1.05

Undressed

What funny, strange creatures, species,
people we are, can be.

So striving, so held back; riddled with prayers,
fantasies, vision, and platitude.

Dancing with masters, slipping with grit;
held in the arms of a racing unknown.

Passion is our pleasure, wondering a pastime.
A cradle of adventure, an inability to express.

I so long for the revelation of a mercy
that will come to us to undress.

22.29

26.1.05

Between movements

On a pause between our movements:
from the isolation of our cradle moments,
those banded tribes in selfish ego, fighting
for survival in a first-come world.

Now like our lesser creatures we learn that
co-ordination takes us forward: togetherness
on a much grander scale. We have to go global
now. The movement is across and up.

So we pause; we waver and hesitate: so much
new thought to accommodate. Is it really too late
to make that move out of our self-cocoons
into a butterfly world of the social human?

We did not come here to falter now or retreat.
Our project is of a grander design.
The scale is shifting up a gear, up an octave.
Our flight is open before us, has always been.

The highway is mapped out for us, carved like
love poetry beneath our skin.

11.40
28.1.05

Life is

Life is

A brief moment in the middle of eternity:
So rich we cannot catch its creativity.
We need be quick lest we waste the taste
Of it; the time at our disposal.

Fluttering as a dream, a dance of bees,
Veiled like a mischievous djinn.
We must make effort, movement, if
Our intention is to enter in.

13.21
30.1.05

Of our making

The world is no lesser nor greater
Than our minds can create,
Can infiltrate, participate.

Outside we view that which we mould
Anew from our inner spaces:

We live ourselves too much in the realms
Of others' making, being too timid to cast
Our own creation into a forming world.

That which has always been, remains.
That which comes forth as a new child,
Is from our own birthing.

12.50
12.2.05

Our domain

We live by our every thought: our
imagination entangles us into a shared
yet distinct reality. We are the creators
of our own tastes, turbulence, tawdry
or fantastical encounters.

Sometimes we are victims to the collective
dread that circles thro' our psyche:
sensitive creatures we lay, receiving all drops
of the collective consensus called life.

We exist in the domain of our own naming.

22.16
13.2.05

Meal for one

‘Why dost thou make only a meal for one?’

‘Because I cook only for I’

‘Why’ist that?’ good friend. Pray, do tell.

‘Tis no secret, oh enquirer’ I did confess.

‘My life is to love me, before I do love thee,
before I die’.

13.52
20.2.05

Life is magic

Life is magic. Beating wonder in the veins
Of every experience

I long to hear. I was born with ears.
I pray I use them.

Hungry heart, magic attractor; hunting for
The game to feast on.

In this my pleasure lies, my onward journey
Cries out, calls me on.

19.14
24.3.05

**The Influence of Incubatory Warmth on the Artificial Synthesis
of Certain Steroids in the Testicles of Rats**

Veiled and narrow.

The danger of the scholar's vision: too tight
to see the dancing gorilla;
missing wood, missing trees, missing forest.

The above title is a true one. The academy published it.
The academy does not sponsor this poem.

Thank you.

19.15
24.3.05

Gilded soldier

Forget the sorcery of that determination that
drove me on, battling like a gilded soldier against
the dying of vision, against an embattled life of
average fulfilment.

As a drowning sailor discards his extraneous baggage,
so did I wave behind all the little things that held out
the possibility of touch and shelter: the promise of
a shared picture of history.

I expected the storm to arrive any minute like a
judging hurricane, a bane against my time, my endeavour.
There was nothing I could measure in this but me;
I could expect no sacrifice of another.

Dear Lover, this I do acknowledge now.
I left you all behind. There is no guilt in my tinge
of the moments frozen in frame, in words like these.
Guilt is a luxury of time I cannot carry. Yet such instances

have been recorded for posterity, perhaps to be re-opened
in proportioned memory-packets when I reach some rest.
I am no drowning sailor, yet my need for travelling light is
near the same. I swim much faster as one, for now.

I listen to stories of others growing old, swinging babies
to and fro' like vessels of awaiting wisdom. I am filling
the pail now...filling the pail. I aim to be back on track
one day to partake of these wondrous human moments.

18.30
31.3.05

Cosmic Law

'I shall always be with you inside the eternal present'
is a truth I wish I understood:

to grace a trace upon the people we mingle with,
perhaps love, then remember them in their moments
as our tapestry of continuous living.

Such beauty that no earth bound philosophy can capture.

Our forever contact, eternal exposure, is a cosmic law
so sublime it goes beyond what I can manage in my
everyday personal touches, in soft embraces.

23.39

23.4.05

All together

It's the small as well as the grand: the almighty
as well as the infinitesimal. From the cosmos

to the atom, from the Divine to the molecule.
It's not about separate things. It never was.

It's a tapestry and we are the weavers.
It is our trade, our labour, our skill.

The work is unfinished, holes to be sown,
breakages to darn, threads to unite.

We have assistance in the preparation.
We have love in our duty, our service.

All parts must come together. All hands on deck.
All lovers to the Beloved's corner.

16.00

14.5.05

Coming together

‘Are you contemplating the water?’ she asked
as I stood staring at the pond, hearing her voice
behind me after so many years. I had been
anticipating her arrival. I wasn’t contemplating;
I had been waiting.

I had come to meet a love I had never left.
Only I had forfeited; I had never approached.

‘People don’t change’, she told me. ‘You haven’t changed’.
‘I have’, I wanted to say. Yet between us I had not changed.
That was my proof; the presence of today like all past days.

‘People do change’ I argued. ‘Only that it’s slow and
sometimes imperceptible’. We had both changed, and yet
we hadn’t.

This is the story of a part of me; a part that journeys with
me and yet does not journey with me.

This is the story of something greater than shifting events.

I looked at her child as if it were my own. Of course it was
not. There were no facial similarities; none of her’s either.

For a brief time I felt like a father: a shared congregation.
Yet I was only a brief lunchtime surrogate. I knew this

between the pasta we ate, between the river walk.
We talked as we walked between two rivers; parallel

paths joining in on our coming together for this,
our prized yet infrequent meetings. We’ve always met

like disjointed lovers, afraid to say what we really wanted.
I’ve never forgot what it is that I wanted.

I was only afraid to say, and pay the price.

00.22
14.5.05

When you're there, you'll know exactly

All I know is that you know the truth, whether or not
You know it now: it is in you, as the cells compose your body.

When you realise you will laugh.

Everything in this life has been played as a recognition.

Talismans to remind us; to jolt; to wake us.

Truth is like a Priest's hole in one on a Sunday: who can you tell who
wasn't there?

When you're there, you'll know exactly.
Because you've always been there.

It's returning to a place that is so familiar; you'll recognise the voices.

The trick is whether we'll wake.

01.22
20.5.05

Too easy

Sometimes it's hard to be good.

But what choice do we have? The alternative

Is not something I wish to consider.

I make such dilemmas here very simple: my own

Kind of black and white. But what choice do I have?

It makes sense that having no choice is often the

greatest freedom of all. Yet this path is too simple

to be easy.

01.47

20.5.05

Burning man

Senses that at times lie limpid like cowering crabs
in salt-water rock pools after the tide has retreated;

that shimmer undisturbed as silent full-moon seas
yet hide the sleeping Kraken in watery slumber:

I wait for the senses to awake – I feel them tingle
like the air after a burst of thunder-rain.

I know I am a burning man, and all of us are burning.

Let it come, let it scold, let it smoulder us inside out
til the senses of the slumber world rule the dull waves.

12.00
29.6.05

Singers of song

I am the dreamer I have known all along:
I created the song.

I am the wanderer I have met all along:
I wrote the script.

We know what we have always known, yet
left unkindled as a smouldering night-fire –

we are the writers of our own destiny.
We are the singers of our own tune.

Sing out, sing loud, sing on: don't cower
from fear of misplacing the words.

Life snaps into play like a metronome,
each beat a burst into being, each tick, tock,

a heartbeat of our own begging clock,
desiring to be known, to be known.

Sing out, sing loud, sing strong.

22.34
5.7.05

The long walk home

What is it that begs to be known?

A love that curses and blesses: our blood, our veins,
our choices to the calling.

Why must we forget, unlearn, like cradled creatures
in swaddling clothes?

A pain that is unknown to us, so we inflict it in droves
upon ourselves and others. A wasted transaction.

Come, let us shake the lethargy from our bones.
Let us begin the long walk home.

22.40

5.7.05

The interpenetrating nature of mind itself

The interpenetrating nature of mind itself
is a field, embracing thought, encompassing all,

like waves pounded out from middle ocean
do tender touch, sheath, or shatter shore.

If one adores, all near do adore too
for such feelings do spread and influence.

And if we hate, all near do despair with us
for the negative stings those beneath our wings.

Therefore be gentle in thought, and kind in image,
since the nature of mind does penetrate all.

21.41

6.7.05

The hands of the collective

Every practice emerges from and reaches into,
as hands of the individual merged with the hands of
the collective, the extended fabric of our mesh,
our matrix, our mind, our shared species soul.

This is our great evolutionary goal: it's galactic,
gigantic, gi-normous, a Golgotha of an aim;
glory-bound yet burden laden we stretch into
the woven silk of the greater good.

This is where our ancestors once stood,
yet fell at the task, at the turning point,
tripping up at the tipping point of the jump-time.
Let us not fail now, not now that we've come this far.

22.05
6.7.05

We hunger to speak

We hunger to speak, yet often language says nothing.

So we yearn for greater satisfaction, and fill our days,
our hours and moments with other distractions,
to compensate, or to delay some unknown gathering.

We play at our illusions, our substitutions with a strange,
twisted fervour, an inconsolable grace, saving face;
with a tinge, we find our way with secondary voices.

Yet I long, I burn, and so I turn the cheek against the genies
that ply me with stories and fanciful orgies of a tangible world:
what fascinates me, that which draws my soul, is the language

that tells of our possible futures, our creative inheritance.

I am only drunk with the wine of finer things.

22.22

6.7.05

To embrace where we're going

The pain of collapsing our ego-heart is immense:
a feeling of not being up to the task.

We reject the duty rather than rejoice; run from
the task-master of such a difficult choice.

A life of avoiding yet embracing, of taking things
to our bosoms that aid us little, as comfort whelps.

Help is at hand in one's heart, in hearing the voice
that sits in silent corners with beaming face.

To embrace where we're going requires we be humble,
as the garden bumble bee that sacrifices to unite.

23.08

6.7.05

Everybody's place

As Icarus flies overhead, as wax melts and sunbeams burn,
so too do the brutal acts burn our own flesh and kin:
is this the world we, as single soul, must live within?

If even an individual limb becomes torn from our great body,
so too does each single limb on our own frame ache, as if each
sinew and tendon trembles from the wound of a global gash.

As above, so below. And as over there, so here too.
There is nothing separate, nothing new.
That which affects each other affects us all.

The way forward, to transcend, is a global call.
Each thought, step, sacrifice, gets counted: each atrocity
creates a scar upon our species face. This is not the place

nor time for such ancient, archaic understandings.
Life is in transition – our fate is now in position
for a most memorable move. It is everybody's place.

15.58
7.7.05

The day London was blasted

Let it come down

An early dawn rises after a dark night,
just as our own personal djinns are purged
through effort into a new cleansed state.

So too will the world soul be plunged into its
own infernal chaos before light is drawn from
its well of deep reserves and a new epoch

is created from the ashes of a long history of
struggle and strife. Everything will know itself
in order to pass beyond its own weakness.

In the end it is a great plan, a great love.
A wonderful human, divine purpose.
Let it come down.

21.26
10.7.05

Burn

We claim our debts.
We play our part.

As cells to the whole,
the collective is our goal.

To pass through, we must
burn, burn, burn.

22.16
16.7.05

In the need of circumstance

You'll miss me; I'll miss you
when I'm, when you're gone.
Immersed together in songs,

with glasses of wine in hand
in our intense time of normality;
short yet moments that speak of longer.

Shared instances that fit together
in the need of circumstance.

To be here right now is
meaningful to the both of us.

23.23
18.7.05

Losing time

Here I am;
drinking music, playing wine,
losing time.

I didn't come here for the fish bowl,
or the food plate, or the sofa.

Comfort and pleasure can be had
yet I have no wish to engrain them.

I did not come here for this.
I did not come here for this.

00.03
30.7.05

We struggle

So much for the answers, so much for the quest;

did I say I hear voices in my chest?

We have our blueprint, our very own design:

we sigh, longing to hear amongst the grind

of our daily binds, screechings of white noise.

00.11

30.7.05

The alchemist's job

I am an alchemist of others' hearts, not mine.
All that is needed is a catalyst.
They are already waiting to be sparked.
As we all are. We only require different ignitions.

00.16
30.7.05

Moon in Arcos

I left the moon in Arcos behind
as I flew above the skyline
of a reddened-yellow field of light;

this was a flight from one shifted moment
to the next like a transition that calls
us forth upon another journey.

We shall be known by our actions
in all times

and thus must mark our own passing
in appropriate ways.

15.34

16.8.05

For you

You are the death of my poetry
for with you I am wordless
and stranded in these times
as a deaf mute, tender to your presence.

15.36

16.8.05 (for E.)

Why

To do that one thing
that is asked of us
against all else.

To do all else in neglect
of that one thing
is the sin of our omission.

I live in need of duty
to find, understand and accomplish
that which has been asked of me

and to that which I have already agreed.

16.45
16.8.05

Safe journey

Safe journey
to my fellow traveller;
Safe journey
to all who are beautiful

and who keep the *adab* of
presence and behaviour in their soul.
You are one of these persons:
also you who read these words
and understand.

16.48

16.8.05 (for Arcos)

The Promise

We are in chaos now
and the world asks for our sanity.

Amidst the turmoil that is to come
we must form the islands of harmony
to weather the coming storm.

The rain of confusion will press against
us like a skin of irritable insanity
that raises the waves of emotions.

In all of this there are shifts
to a greater morn, yet work is needed
now to quell that which follows a fall.

We are coming to the rage of our chaos now
and those of us who made our promises
will be called upon to perform.

16.56
16.8.05

No design

Drugged by the wine of physical time
I delay my coming through:

Daily events of sharp imprints impale
me to my responsibilities –

can I ever recover from these binds?

Is it my duty to escape from the threads
that hold me to a closer destiny?

In dreams do we begin our beginning;
in life do we live our promises.

To be here is no accident in design.

23.19
20.8.05

The undone too

The present moment lasts all our life
and still it is very short.

Fingerprints return to dust eventually –
is this what we want to hold onto?

We mark ourselves by our own passing,
our own internal grading.

I have no regrets in anything that I have done,
and bless the undone too.

23.23
20.8.05

Closer to the heart

There are moments
when I feel closer to the heart of me.
Closer to the heart of myself.

Stillness. Sounds of life; smells
that penetrate this body, pour
through the heart to diffuse within.

Standing here, an observer to all around,
separate from yet joined; of yet not of.
Detached yet mingled with the mesh.

There are moments
when I feel closer to the heart of me.
Closer to the centre of thee.

18.49
2.9.05

Home

The steps we take,
 in the footsteps of others,
in the footprints of our own

lead a way back out
 of this maze we call home,
from illusion to the Clear.

I once said 'I have
 no way of knowing which
way the wind is blowing':

this has not changed:
 only my direction
is one way – forward.

And I cannot stop,
 nor decrease my pace,
for the place I seek is Home.

19.35
20.9.05

The End