

# As I See It

Verses

by

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Poems written over many years.

Some pieces may have appeared elsewhere in the past

under my own or various pen names.

# Contents

1. Social Comment
2. The Natural World

## Social Comment

### Under Bridges

Life was cartons  
under bridges  
begging coins from passers by  
newsprint blankets  
cardboard mattress  
sleeping underneath the sky  
just a youngster  
not yet twenty  
faithful mongrel by his side  
eating sometimes  
bathing rarely  
How he lived, and how he died.

## Human Garbage.

I saw a woman lying there, just lying on the ground,  
as if she'd simply gone to sleep in a comfy place she'd found  
except the place was white with snow, her bed was hard and gray  
and the blankets that now covered her bore news of yesterday

And the silent stars looked down on her to bid a fond goodnight  
to this, their child, now fast asleep, so still, and cold, and white  
and people were just walking past as if she wasn't there;  
perhaps they they hadn't noticed her perhaps they didn't care.

I wondered where she came from and what her name had been  
what tales she might have told us of the many things she'd seen.  
Just one more of life's tragedies, a silent bitter end  
for someone who perhaps had been a mother, or a friend.

Were there none to mourn her? I wondered as I stood  
and offered up a little prayer - I thought that someone should -  
for soon she would be carried off, examined and cremated  
like so much that is tossed aside, her value underrated.

## Two Men

Two men sit and cry  
two men wait to die  
one is in prison, one is not  
one is cold, the other is hot.  
One will be given a lethal injection  
releasing him from this life  
because it's the humane way to go  
even though he killed his wife.

The other lies in a hospital bed  
he will not last the night  
yet he must die in agony  
to kill him wouldn't be right.

Two men sit and cry  
two men waiting to die  
one a murderer given a buffer  
one an innocent left to suffer.

## A Better Place

Wouldn't you think that if people cared  
and truly believed in a better place  
instead of grieving your demise  
they'd want you to go to heaven?

Instead they want to keep you around  
no matter how great your need may be.  
They mourn your loss and say they're sad  
and maybe they are to some degree.

I know if I died, tomorrow perhaps,  
my family would feel quite bad,  
bad that they hadn't taken the time  
while I was still alive.

But that's the way it goes  
I suppose.

## Down But Not Out.

Regularly we assemble

and each observe

the downcast eyes

the drooping stance

of the dejected,

the shifty with their

hasty furtive glances,

a few hard stares

from the brazen

toughing it out.

Reluctantly we advance,

shuffling, hands in pockets

to sign away our dignity,

admit defeat,

but Hey!

for a little longer

we will not starve,

our families will eat.

## Six Million

Six million people

Ordinary people

Living out their lives

Soon to become

Living breathing skeletons

Empty eyed yet walking

People seen as things

Inconvenient things

Things to be disposed of

So they were.

## The Insignificant Crumb

Confusion, she say:

A crumb: so small,

so insignificant,

yet it irritates.

With a flick of the finger

harmony is restored.

## A Tribute.

For centuries the working man has slaved to make his master rich  
with blood and sweats and tears he toiled in factory and field and ditch.

In sweltering subterranean seam the miner had it worse than most  
with caged canary or with lamp he worked beside another's ghost.

For, all too oft, explosions took young lives while greedy bosses slept  
and floods and fires were commonplace as grieving wives and mothers wept.

My ancestors and relatives lost boys and men in just this way  
and yet another tragedy hit the headlines yesterday.

No matter what the mine produces shouldn't safety matter most?

But money has the loudest voice. To miners everywhere: a Toast!

## Compassion Fatigue

A tiny shack; a woman lies and dies of AIDS,  
while seven children watch and wait.

A patch of dessicated earth;  
a man attends his only cow  
and watches cloudless skies.

Orphaned children on the street  
in makeshift shelters, dressed in rags;  
lacklustre eyes have ceased to watch.

I watch.

I watch with breaking heart  
and weep.

Compassion fatigue?

Says who?

## A Hard Life

They lacked understanding,  
probably never stopped to think;  
whatever the reasons  
it made life hard.

Children need something,  
some kind of reaching out,  
or life is a lonely place,  
home, a prison yard.

I don't think they ever knew;  
assumed this is how was how it was,  
never had enough love  
to share it around.

Stunted emotions  
passed through the generations.  
Is there's an answer?  
Not one I've found.

## An End To War

Written in the light of the announcement that the IRA had at last handed over weapons for decommissioning in order to save the Peace Process in Ireland:

Is this an End To War?

Horror, Conflict, War.

Words that cause us to tremble. What the hell are they for?

Let us not try to dissemble. Horror is no good to man nor beast.

Conflict only brings pain.

War is described as fighting for peace but what, in the end, do we gain?

One side is vanquished, the other side wins,

weapons are laid down at last; then just as one's ended another begins.

Does anyone learn from the past?

Millions of lives have been lost in this way,

innocent people destroyed and what politician can honestly say

it was something we couldn't avoid?

But sometimes, just sometimes, logic prevails

and talking replaces insanity and, arguments ended, hostility fails

and wisdom supercedes vanity.

Arrogance Indeed.

God - if god there be - is beyond my understanding;  
unknowable, ineffable, dweller in endless time and space,  
themselves a mystery to me.

I ponder creatures of the deep and wonder what made these:  
a mind infinitely vast or merely evolution?

Humans, in their wisdom, take pride in their bigger brains,  
in fire power, in language; with brute force and ignorance  
we try to tame the world.

But now and then, like some old dog, it shakes itself and moves  
and we, like fleas upon its back are simply tossed aside.

And what of God - if god there be - in all of this?

The holy men search for answers in their books and speak of humility.

Humans need their gods it seems, hard wired for religion,  
but to make God in our image is arrogance indeed.

## Insanities

1.

Perhaps we are but parasites  
upon the face of this old earth  
who, now and then, reacts  
destroying quite a lot of us

It seems insane  
that we should want  
to aid her in her task.

2.

If I like you and you like me  
why is it that we can't agree  
to differ?

To kill for all the paltry reasons  
people trot out plausibly  
is such a waste of life.  
Insanity indeed.

3.

All of us fear what we don't understand

- just watch a dog or a cat -

but that's no reason to kill the thing.

What kind of madness is that?

4.

We put our cats and dogs to sleep

when they're too sick to survive

so why are we so intent on keeping

suffering folk alive?

We insist the terminally ill should live

while healthy babies are killed;

this is the kind of insanity

that leaves my spirit chilled.

5.

Human life is sacred or so the laws decree

what makes us so special? Because we have superior

communication skills we really reckon ourselves

we lord it over everything and think we can call the shots.

A kind of megalomania?

## Sex

### Sex

A poor substitute for love

perhaps

I knew at sixteen

I know it now

but the absence

of the one

makes bedfellows

of many

## Beer And Sex

Beer and sex

a heady mix

ardour is harder

it's stronger yet weaker

what is required

is somewhat meeker

it won't measure up

to what is desired

## Black and Blue

There are things in life you would rather forget  
but they stick, like shit to a shoe;  
scribed on the brain in indelible ink,  
eternally black and blue.

## Canned Hunts

Canned hunts: barbaric,  
cowardly, obscene;  
hand reared animals  
drugged, confined, and shot  
by men with guns but no balls,  
the young die when the mother falls  
and the "hunter" ups and walks.

Animals without a choice  
crying without a voice  
but oh! how money talks.

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