# WHAT TO DO IF TRAPPED IN A LIFT WITH A DENTIST by <u>Marcus Freestone</u> is licensed under a <u>Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0</u> <u>Unported License</u>.

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#### CONFESSION

Hello, my name is Marcus and I'm a poet.

Before you ask, yes, I do know it
for how could one be a poet and not know what one was?

It sounds like a confession I know:
Hello my name is Marcus and I'm an alcoholic
Hello my name is Marcus and I'm a drug addict.
Hello my name is Marcus and I'm guilty of fraud, perjury, insider trading and perverting the course of justice.

Oh no, that wasn't me, that was Jeffery Archer.

Hello, I'm Marcus and this is a poem.

I'm not quite sure where it's going
I'm not quite sure where it's been
or if it's ever been heard or seen.
Does it exist as I write this line?
Will I finish this poem in time?
Will I accidentally commit a crime?
If I did would it help the rhyme?
What is this poem all about?
Will I read it in a whisper or shout?
In constructing the verse will I flout

the acceptable forms of linguistic structure, rhythm and rhyming scheme?

I still don't know what I'm writing about
so therefore I can't do an about turn
until I learn

to discern

between transitory, incoherent ideas that flit through my mind and those that are actually suitable for inclusion in poetry. Sorry.

## THINGS I WAS PROMISED BY 'TOMORROW'S WORLD' WHEN I WAS A CHILD AND HAVE SUBSEQUENTLY BEEN DISAPPOINTED BY THE ABSENCE OF

Where are my x-ray specs? Where is my hovercraft? Where are my silver trousers? I know it may sound daft but I was promised these things when I was in school perhaps all those presenters were playing me for a fool I realise that making a spaceship is probably quite hard but I expected to have my own by now thanks to William Woolard All these things were promised to me and all of us but when I want to go somewhere I still have to take the bus I don't have a teleport bracelet I don't have a hover car I've never seen robot slaves or a titanium bra I don't have a time machine

or a personal dinosaur farm
I don't have my meals in a tablet
or a bionic arm
It's not that we need these things
they are not necessary
but we were promised them all
by those people on the telly
Still they have not materialised
within the world at large
but I suppose if we all had jetpacs
there'd be an airborn congestion charge

#### 10 THINGS YOU WOULDN'T WANT FOR CHRISTMAS

A dead robin in a sock, a relaxation CD that appears to be voiced by Ian Paisley
A pair of trainers pickled in bree
A vague sense of inadequacy
A perambulating hamster nailed to the knee of a disgruntled member of a select committee
A piano where every single key has been replaced by a rotting flea
A rotating vicar nailed to a tree
A swarm of traffic wardens exploding with glee
The bill for Elton John's latest spending spree
Some feces in a hammock I think you will agree
You wouldn't want these presents and neither would me

#### THE IDIOT'S GUIDE TO RELIGION

Old and wrong ideas, superstitious fears killing in the name all gods are the same none of them exist just ghosts in the mist that fall across a mind and say that death is kind 'they're in a better place'? Come say that to my face

Empirically you're wrong, another empty song it's gone on for too long no faith can be that strong god's boot stamps on your face yet still there is no trace of doubt within your heart that you still stand apart from those who don't believe and those who don't receive god's guidance and love and all those myths from up above

Just wake up and see, it's wrong logically you are just like me, a random entity the universe has no soul and neither do we we're just byproducts of chemistry Impersonal laws, no purpose here but this is not a cause for fear we're all free to decide our own will so choose with pride choosing gives you life you see don't abdicate responsibility there's no need to subjugate

your freewill or live by fate wake up and define yourself seize your essence live your life

it's not nihilism, it's just realism it's just real it's just truth it's just life

#### WHY I DON'T WATCH TELEVISION

Death and destruction, another new faction waring religions, old superstitions too much bad science and too much reliance on opinion polls by who alone knows
I can't watch the news, the bigoted views the stupidity it terrifies me here's what to think and how much to drink then expect me to vote it's beyond a joke my intelligence insulted each day
I cannot believe anything you say daily the lies burn into my eyes all of your fears burn into my ears opinion as fact tell me how to act tell me what to think push me to the brink

That's why I don't watch television because I hold you in derision a media prompt for every decision politics and truth a mighty collision statistics are lies the government tries as they patronise with wool over eyes democracy fake they're all on the take for their own sake election mistake

Entertainment stultifies, paint drying before your eyes watch the news absorb the lies as media opinion tries to make you scared of everyone feel the fear as you succumb to their desire for fear and hate divide and rule so they create an enemy for everyone to be against so we become a nation scared to move or breathe and government can rule with ease cos frightened voters don't protest when they know government knows best so don't accept what you are told and don't believe the lies you're sold think for yourself be smart and proud don't just do what is allowed by men in suits who live for power stand firm and we will have our hour

#### 5 THINGS YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO READ IN A TEXT MESSAGE

1

Hope you're enjoying your evening out, I've just burgled your house, I've left the fridge and cooker and a squashed, dead mouse.

Other than those three items, I've taken the bloody lot oh, and your tooth brush has been up my arse yours sincerely, John Prescott.

I saw you last week on the train, you noticed me I think
I wore a loin cloth and trilby can I take you out for a drink?
I followed you home that night so I already know your address
I also went through your wardrobe can you please wear that bright red dress?

3

I've just been checking my list and it's time to come for you I'll call to collect you tomorrow at around half past two if you could please be ready to take your last breath I'll be wearing a cloak and scythe Yours sincerely, Death.

4

You don't know me but I'm your real father

5

Your phone isn't working, you must be imagining this sentence.

#### **CLONING AROUND**

I heard on the news today they've cloned a sniffer dog and now there's global panic that they'll go the whole hog and clone a human being for some nefarious reason which to the unscientific is tantamount to treason "They'll be cloning Hitler next, or Stalin or Hussain," the ignorant will cry without trying to explain why anyone would want to clone a dead dictator or who they actually think would be the instigator of such a pointless act, who would even bother? One Hitler was bad enough we do not need another But that's okay because it's all impossible you'd have to copy everything, experience and all You can't copy someones life revive their history so even a genetic clone has a new personality so, you see, there'll be no new Hitler or Stalin or Hussain so let's get some perspective, back to normality again

#### **EMPIRIC DILEMMA**

Sometimes the corner of my eye deceives me into seeing things that are not there, do not exist. What is this falseness my eye brings?

If we can't trust the evidence of our own eyes then where are we?

Do we believe in anything in this world that we think we see?

Some people think that they've seen ghosts or aliens and UFOs; some people think they've talked to god who tells them how to solve their woes.

Are any of us really here or are we figments in a dream?

Descartes thought he really was but are things as they really seem?

Can we be sure of anything? Is life just one big massive lie that we don't get an answer to at any time, and then we die?

#### JUST CHANGE YOURSELF

It's not going to happen You want to save the world nice idea but you'll still fail

You can never change anything except yourself just change yourself The world is too big and complex everything runs on chaos theory No one can predict the outcome of their actions we can never kill the planet only ourselves We are not that important and the universe doesn't know we're here mother earth is as anthropomorphic as the big guy sitting on a cloud We must all wake up and accept that we're nothing more than random chemical events In humanity there is no divinity just a lot of stupidity and that's what calls the shots cos the guys who run the world all want the fools gold which they covet so much that they stamp on us all to get to it but we'll have the last laugh because

> None of them rule the world we are not the world we only move in our own tiny circles and it's time to adjust our view

It's not going to happen
We can't change the world
only ourselves
so let's do it and make the world
a better place for *all* by removing the stupidity
and false values that blind our minds

If all the people in the world starting thinking for just five minutes each day then we will have markedly improved our lot and someone like Bush can never rise again

> Just change yourself Repeat as necessary

#### JUST LOOK UP

Sometimes at night I look up to the sky the infinity of stars makes me want to cry not from unhappiness but out of sheer awe at the sense of infinity the sky is big, for sure.

Some of those distant lights are bigger than our Earth yet still people think there's something special in their birth that they are so important when they are patently not cos even our whole planet is a dot upon a dot

An infinity of space-time should give us pause for thought and make us quick to question the huge arrogance we're taught so look up at the night sky and just take in the view there's nothing special about me and nothing special about you

But that's not a cause for heartache cos we're here and it is now so let's crack on with living before we take our final bow

#### WHAT TO DO IF TRAPPED IN A LIFT WITH A DENTIST

If you have brought your own wolf with you then obviously all is well. If you have forgotten your wolf you will understandably start to panic. However, providing the dentist is in agreement, an adequate substitute is to whistle the chorus of 'Too Shy' by Kajagoogoo until the emergency services arrive.

#### WHAT TO DO IF TRAPPED IN A LIFT WITH A DOCTOR

The procedure for wolf replacement is similar to that outlined above but involves playing the theme to 'Test Match Special' with spoons and matchsticks.

If you have forgotten to bring your spoons and matchsticks with you then a comb and paper will just about do, but be warned that whistling will have no effect.

#### WHAT TO DO IF TRAPPED IN A KIOSK WITH A CABINET MINISTER

If you have forgotten your tear gas then it is legally permissible after ten minutes has elapsed to release your wolf.

Anyone foolish enough to enter an enclosed space with a cabinet minster without adequate wolf protection deserves everything they get.

It is, however, advisable to ascertain their exact cabinet position.

If you discover that they are only a junior minister then you must wait twenty minutes before releasing the wolf.

#### WHAT TO DO IF TRAPPED IN A KIOSK WITH MICHAEL HESSLETINE

Run like fuck.
The wolf will be of no use.

#### **HOW DO THEY DO IT?**

How do they do it the murderers, the rapists and bully boys?
Inflicting pain and violence treating people just like toys.
I don't know how they sleep at night or what could motivate a human being to become such an incessant ball of hate.
What do they think they've achieved? Is it something they enjoy?
Does it fill their hearts with glee when they seek out and destroy?
Do they think they're better than the people they abuse and kill and will they just go on and on never having had their fill?
It mystifies me every day that somebody gets such a thrill from ruining and taking lives it must be such a special skill.
The politicians aren't exempt I don't know how they sleep at all after each and every busy day of shoving us against the wall

of intransigence, low intelligence, no recompense, on the fence.

I've always wanted a quiet life and those I meet are much the same they seem to realise that life is merely an absurdist game that nothing is worth dying for and nobody's worth killing that we're all equal in this game nobody has top billing but still I see that I'm obliged to do no harm to others and not to bully or harass my sisters or my brothers so why can't everybody see that this is just the way to be?

Why is there so much penury so many inflicting misery?

How do they do it? Why do they do it? What are we going to do about it?

#### WHITE COFFINS

When I was twelve a friend of mine died. He was eleven and I went to his funeral.

In the back row of the chapel I ogled the girls from his school and thought how nice they all were even though they were visibly distraught.

The dreary, depressing music piped up and we all stood up.

I became aware of movement behind me and four men came in carrying a wooden box.

I'd never been to a funeral before and I'd never been two feet away from a coffin. As it passed slowly by my head a horrible thought leapt unbidden into my mind: "Oh shit! Mark's in there!" Then I thought "Hang on, no he isn't."

Then I thought "If he's not in there, what is in the coffin?"

I was suddenly stuck in a metaphysical paradox and as a man chanted the meaningless liturgies and platitudes my mind was racing in all directions at once.

At the end of the pointless service of empty words and false comforts I realised that I'd cried enough to leave a large puddle on the stone floor and it struck me as odd that my face could contain that much liquid and also, absurdly, that perhaps I should offer to clear it up.

Throughout the service I looked fixedly at the back of the pew in front - anywhere but the coffin. Why do they put kids in white coffins? It's a fucking horrible thing to do.

I seems to say "This person never had a life".

Small coffins are bad enough anyway but don't use white ones.

Afterwards, all the adults were stuffing their faces with food and drink, and laughing and joking. I was really puzzled and angry. "Hang on," I wanted to shout, "we've just cremated an eleven year old boy, what the fuck are you doing?"

Now I understand: they are and drank to *experience* something to use their senses, to feel *alive*.

They laughed and joked about trivial things

because nobody wanted to talk about why we were gathered there and what had just happened because there were no words to speak.

Now I understand - it's known as displacement.

Twenty three years later I understand all too well.

At the time I didn't, couldn't, didn't want to, delete as applicable.

So I went outside and sat alone in the middle of a large field.

It seemed like days, that half an hour, and it changed me forever.

Never such innocence again.

I looked up at the sky and shouted aloud

I closed my eyes and sarcastically awaited a reply. None arrived, of course:
no answer to my anthropomorphic gesture of desperation
because there are no gods, no angels, no heaven, no hell, no answer.
The only things in the universe are physical matter and abstract concepts
and you can't have the latter without the former because ideas only exist in the mind
and a mind is only a metaphysical abstraction of a physical brain.
Consciousness is electricity and chemicals and nothing else
and so is the universe.
Therefore I received no answer, but I never expected to

In one sense, but never in the other.

WHO BRED ALL THE REPUBLICANS?

so eventually I got up and rejoined the party

Who bred all the Republicans? Let's see if we can find out.

Which pharmaceutical laboratory or government agency was responsible?

They certainly can't have arisen by the process
we've come to know as natural selection
Cos they're all twisted and wrong
and most definitely unnatural.

They're very much the duck-billed-platypus of the political world;
ugly and pointless.

In any case, Republicans are mostly bible-bashers
who don't believe in natural selection
Despite the fact that we all have fish bones
in our necks from our evolutionary past.

They really should have stopped breeding a long time ago
even before Reagan began to appear in cowboy films
Where did all the Republicans come from?
Who was responsible?

Please tell us so we can find them
and beat them around the knees and ankles
with sticks and raw sewage.

Oh dear, now we come to the Bush family?

Such an abomination of nature
they're even more twisted and wrong than the previous lot.

They're so faulty and inbred
they could even be members of our very own royal family.

What sort of a gene pool do they have in Texas?

It's so small it may even be *subatomic*Similar in size to a quark or even a Higgs-Boson and that's a very small particle/gene pool.

#### REPETITION

Life consists of experiences
That's all we have
except memories of previous experiences
Why do we seem to prefer to live in memories
rather then experiencing something new?
And how much of our experience
is genuinely new anyway?

So much of what we do and think is merely repetition of a previous action or thought Memories are inherently unreliable they are not an accurate record they are coloured and shaped by our present mood If memories aren't really memories and experience and thought is mostly repetitious then what do we actually have? What does human existence really consist of? Ah, there's the question The one that poets and philosophers have been begging for years begging for an answer May I posit that, like matter what we have is Potential Difference We all have the capacity to reach above the mundane to transcend the daily grind of anxiety and doubt

to silence the incessant, futile chatter of our fragmented minds.

So why don't we?

Why do so few even try?

There's no indication that this will cease to be the case any time soon and therefore no indication that the chaotic mess of human society will be resolved any time soon.

Until then, we will always have poets and philosophers. I've been a slave to poetry and philosophy all my life I don't mean that I look to poets and philosophers for answers though that used to be the case but rather that I write in order to understand

I now have most of the answers I always sought If I had all of them, would I still write?

Sarte said that people write in order to understand life Does that mean that when you understand life you stop writing?

Writing is my life

I don't really do anything else nothing that interests me anyway So if I ever had all the answers and was completely content would I actually be worse off? If you can pass each day happily without thinking about all this stuff then be thankful you're not a poet It's a filthy job

But somebody's got to do it

Well I have to

#### **PORNIFICATION**

Some of us men have sense Don't stereotype us all I personally hate violence and porn and football. I'm deeply disturbed by adverts

with women in revealing tops clearly dressed as schoolgirls displayed on our bus stops. What message should I take from this and does it matter much? Does it bother other people or am I out of touch? Is it a post modern joke I wasn't invited to? I don't want porn at bus stops But some obviously do. I once saw a girl of twenty and written on her t-shirt was 'I'm gagging for an F.C.U.K.' is that how modern girls flirt? For half a horrid second a primeval side of me pictured what I'd do to her up against a tree. I'm a gentleman I'd never cross the line but others often do not just from time to time.

The bus stops are bad enough but this was so much worse I felt physically ill at my testosterone curse. I wanted to warn her about what had flashed through my head but it would doubtless be a tricky path to tread. I loathe this kind of branding that doubtless comes from men provoking my libido again and again and again. You may think I'm overreacting but listen to the next verse and then tell me that this isn't all a terrible curse.

Once I saw a girl of eight with mini-skirted hips her hair all in bunches and scarlet painted lips the image of a prostitute she walked with her mother I wanted to punch that woman but of course I didn't bother. Instead I bottled up my anger and a violent urge to cry 'when did this start happening and someone tell me why?' Why would a mother do that

does she think it's fancy dress?
Where do you buy those clothes from who are they meant to impress?
All they did to me was leave me in distress what did the future hold for this junior mistress?
Not to mention the 'Playboy' skirts
And 'porn star' t shirts
Is that what people now aspire to?
I really wish I had a clue.

This isn't unconnected to the adverts using sex to sell me everything from razors to Vitamin B Complex. It's all so disturbing I don't know where to turn from the provoking images into my eyes they burn. I don't know where to go now but I thought I'd write this poem Cos if you're a woman these things are all worth knowing. They may not have occurred to you but here's my point of view is this how things should be? Is there anything we can do? That woman with the t-shirt is of course not to blame and part of me liked it to my everlasting shame but I wouldn't be surprised if she thinks a suffragette was an early 80s punk band that's how bad things can get. Emancipation isn't getting your tits out and drinking tons of lager and behaving like a lout. Being a man isn't competing in stupidity so grow up now And find some lucidity And stop the post-modern rape jokes And stop acting like blokes And act like a human being instead Start thinking with your head We all need higher ideals To feel what our neighbour feels Embracing humanism Isn't high idealism It's just realism.

#### PACKED LUNCH

Once in junior school
I couldn't stomach the food
my mother had given me
cos it wasn't very good
sandwiches I didn't like
filled my tupperware
every day at lunchtime
I wished that they weren't there
I tried to eat a bit of them
but couldn't manage a sliver
so on the way home
I threw them in the river

The next day once again
I had some similar muck
packed up in tin foil
just my rotten luck
I don't know what was in them
whether it was fish or hog
and so it was, when I got home
I flushed them down the bog
Sadly, though they floated
and were soon discovered
and therefore I was punished
they locked me in the cupboard

That last line was a lie
but I couldn't find a rhyme
for the events that actually happened
when I was told to apologise but wouldn't
and ended up standing on the landing for an hour
looking at my fish tank
They had a weird idea of punishment in my family

#### 1234

1 2 3 4 hundred times
I wish you'd shut your face
I cannot stand your idle thoughts
I wish you knew your place
It's further down the food chain
than a human should reside
but that's your place cos you're
something amobeas can deride

1 2 3 4 thousand times
I cringe at things you say
you never cease to amaze me
it just gets worse each day
Ideas drip from your mind
I just wish they were fewer
cos everything you say is

1 2 3 4 million times
my skin crawls when you speak
it makes me questions Darwin
that a mind can be so weak
If you see a book it frightens you
and science is a far off land
there was nothing natural in your selection
you cannot have been planned

1 2 3 4 billion times
you fail to think each day
a life of hate and ignorance
is your moronic way
you're pointless and redundant
there is nothing you can do
however many times I try
I can't see the point of you
Forgive me if you think
this is just bitter polemic
I wish you were just one person
but you're now an epidemic

#### WI-FLI

I wonder
if a mayfly
ever thinks
about the good old days,
when it was only lunchtime?

#### **8 THINGS YOU CAN DO ON A TRAIN**

1

Go to the toilets and rub a dead fox across your face it may just possibly improve the smell of the place.

2

Sellotape a photo of Hitler onto a beer mat and then smear his face with a gallon of pig fat.

3

Pretend you're using a laptop by folding some cardboard in half and writing a windows error message to make the Mac users laugh.

1

Pretend you're using an i-pod by placing a bee in each ear and holding a gaudy pencil case to be in a pain in everyone's rear. Entertain the passengers stretch your legs for a while by frantically goose stepping up and down the aisle.

6

Pretend to be tory, read the Daily Mail and smile and, to be extra convincing, goose step down the aisle.

7

Creep up behind Michael Portillo while he is unaware put his elbows in a soda stream and just leave him there.

8

When the guard comes around pretend to be asleep refuse to produce your ticket as a protest against the extortionate prices and poor service.

#### 15 YEARS

I should've been here 15 years ago but I sat and wasted so much time on self doubt and pointless misery I never stood to claim what's mine

Now I'm where I always wanted living on my own happy and free others' opinions no longer fill my head I've climbed out of the family tree

To a land where my mind is clear free of doubt and pressure from outside now I carry out plans successfully walk forward through my life with pride

The rules say I should be dead by now and I would be if others had their say the world did its' best to get rid of me but now I'm stronger and here to stay

You can still doubt me if you want to for not having a mortgage or a car but I can do without those encumbrances I know where I'm going and that's far

So far away from you, you can't conceive of where I am already at cos now I am no longer holding back I'm running free and that is that

A fact you cannot even comprehend

cos you don't know what freedom means you're just a drone who plays the lottery perpetuating recessive genes

Success to you is living hell to me I wouldn't go there for any price No one can ever buy me now I see straight through you in a trice

So from now on it is my life To do with whatever I choose I won't ever see things your way or walk a millimeter in your shoes

Cos I am self perpetuating
I make my choices for myself
Now my path is clear in front of me
I've got down from the dusty shelf

Where people sit and waste a lifetime being a drone or sheep or clone I don't need your advice or platitudes I can succeed now on my own

Cos it's my rules, my terms, my strategy I'm playing now in my own game Don't you dare to try and copy me cos you and I are not the same

You must decide upon your own path don't look to me or anyone It's not society you should look to think for yourself, that's lesson done

#### 21st CENTURY BLUES

I've got the 21st century blues I'm a man out of his time I've got the 21st century blues Politicians lies and crime Everywhere things going wrong Does the human race have long? We haven't evolved in the last 40,000 years Perhaps that explains all our confusions and fears Still fighting tribal battles internecine strife and hate Outdated racial conflict battles between church and state Archaic superstition Informs political decision religious contradiction leads us all into perdition

I've got the 21<sup>st</sup> century blues a planet swallowed by the internet I've got the 21<sup>st</sup> century blues So many things we just forget Like how to speak to people conversation face to face Can we get off this insane path or will Bush have the last laugh? With his finger on the button as god whispers in his ear a delusional fool creating hate and fear

I've got the 21st century blues Will I live to see a change I've got the 21st century blues In this world it's me who's strange Cos I don't need a belief For existential relief You call me infidel and want to send me down to hell but there is no such place so blow the smile off your face When I die I'm going nowhere and you will rot like me In the end we're all just microbes the truth you refuse to see Your world view so distorted that your mind is never free

I've got the 21<sup>st</sup> century blues but at least I am still me I've got the 21<sup>st</sup> century blues but at least my mind is free

#### ODE TO A BAG OF LEAVES

I really, really, really love a cup of tea it's tasty it fuels me it makes me happy

#### SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

At what point should a towel be washed?

#### WAITER

I went up to a 34 waist and in haste

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