Poetry Series

Robert James Smith - poems -

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Alone And Alive

alone and alive eyes open and clear beast in the jungle my home it is here

force on arrival all danger is near shelter survival adrenaline fear

sleep and consumption i'll take what i need my lust is to live on others i feed

lock on each movement the predator's stare thick perspiration and hyper aware

i am all i need and here shall I thrive hunter and hunted alone and alive

Be Honest

Be honest with yourself
To you I bravely tell
With such deception in the world
Don't fool yourself as well

Be honest with yourself Love takes you by the hand It may not last forever So embrace it when you can

Be honest with yourself And keep an open mind If you fear not to be wrong Great treasures you may find

Be honest with yourself
When time has come to fight
You're stronger than you think you are
When holding through the night

Be honest with yourself
When you feel weak in spirit
You can kill the demon if
You first refuse to fear it

Be honest with yourself
When others let you down
You're the only one you need
With no one else around

Be honest with yourself
The mirror tends to lie
What you see imperfect
May look great to other eyes

Be honest with yourself
Through pain or loss regret
Remember that what troubles you
Still hasn't killed you yet.

Broken Sailor

Big sea under bigger sky
Failing sailing try to fly to
Land on sand to mend and then to
See me sail the sea again

Buttercup

Hello there my buttercup Your petals are so fine So fragile in the morning sun How brightly you do shine!

Off to face my busy day and now a cheery fellow Above you first I'll hold my chin To turn the palest yellow!

Complacent

silent stoic strong as can be why would he need a friend like me?

hard cold facing attacks sightless he feels the first blow of the ax

rescue now how i don't know the ax would destroy me with only one blow

courage alive but what's that to me? i'll use any excuse but i won't save the tree

Cruel Widow

O widow! What is it you mourn? Is it the man? Or labor borne? The loss of love? Or yea the past? Perhaps that beauty cannot last?

Wherefore do you shake and moan? Your loss of youth or child grown? For all the things you'll never own that echo through your hollow home?

In life admit you shunned the man Who offered love and took your hand And yielded to each cruel demand Yet only now you understand.

Deeper

Even though you're beautiful that isn't why I like you.
A meadow full of reasons burst like flowers through the snow

Even though you're beautiful that isn't why I want you The sparkle of your eyes reflect the desert stars that shine aglow

Even though you're beautiful that isn't why I need you Basking in your sunshine as a sunlit tree I grow

Even though you're beautiful that isn't why I love you As your beauty so is my love deeper than you know

Demon Seed

The demon of Want is the brother of Need poor simple farmers out planting their seed for lively Ambition whose hunger they feed and starving young children Necessity and Greed

Necessity grew
Little Greedy grew fat
Invention and Progress
were born after that
Both suffered greatly
and died for the sins
of Corruption, Destruction
the evilest twins.

Disorder

howl of wind a taste of chance and salt and sea and circumstance

grids of life in heartbeat time tears in our precious paradigm

disorder will dance and sing when comfort is not comforting

is it wrong to shun the warm and seek the beauty of the storm?

Falling Knife

Getting a grip on my life is a chore it slips through my fingers it falls to the floor

All that I hold that is dearest to me abandons my grasp for the floor and to flee

It cuts through the floor and falls down to the street toward unlucky pedestrians it's likely to meet

Ever so faster it falls with the sound of the wind and the air as it speeds to the ground

Slicing it's way the earth's rocky crust through aeons of layers of stone, ash and dust

To blistering magma's pyretic abuse where gold silver and diamonds lie wait to seduce

It burns through the earth to the hot iron core as it screams to the gods not to fall anymore

Every dawn of the morning each day of my life with the sharpness of steel on the edge of a knife

The dream flees the kitchen yet sleep somehow lingers from depths of my mind through the tips of my fingers

A great saving catch! Well the effort was grand and most happily futile thus saving my hand

Falling away past the tea in my cup when it rests on the floor I can then pick it up

Farther Chair

Yonder on the farther chair upon the porch nearby the stair a winged beauty feathers fair was looking at me sitting there

So startled by this morning treat He sang a song to bless and greet The sunshine and the break of day I slowed so he'd not fly away

This bird was such a lovely find I truly wish I knew the kind For Orinthological pursuit I so neglected in my youth

His song of freedom, sky and spring Throughout my world I heard it ring So bound within my working day I wished I too could fly away

I knew not where to begin For I'd never play a role within the song to which he sang and hopped But then his song abruptly stopped

"I know that look" condemned the beast 'You crave my beauty and that is least You looked at me, then to the sky you think you're wanting most to fly

But not flight that you're searching for Express the truth you just want more. Your whole existence packed with stuff For you can never have enough.

I have no hands to hold or make the tools you craft or food you bake I'm forced to fly to get around imperiled by the landing ground See how high your airplanes fly
As each contaminates the sky
In graceless stones propelled and hurled
You cast yourselves around the world.

For me the hawk soars overhead one winged mistake and I'll be dead You've fenced the dangers from your yard Don't tell me that your life is hard

You plan your dominance with words Your god says you're worth more than birds! One day soon we'll see a fall from grace the race that wants it all.'

Admonished by his hardened spirit
It pained and shamed me just to hear it.
The vicious truth is yet so strange
For I still know not how to change.

Follow

Follow your dreams into unbridled passion grinding of life wears on body and tooth

Follow clear visions and yield to your fantasies drink deep each night from the fountain of youth

Follow great wisdom defy the seduction of indolent, greedy, the crass and uncouth

Follow your reason with care, thought and intellect sail winds of freedom in search of the truth

Gloppity Glue (Children's Story)

I make the best cookies! And you'll like them too
The secret ingredient is gloppity glue.
I start out with sugar I mix it with spice
I use a big spoon and a big bag of ice

Then I add flour and milk and some berries
Raspberries horseradish hot dogs and cherries
Mustard makes cookies so easy to chew
But they wouldn't taste right without gloppity glue.

Gloppity Glue it is so hard to find.

I go to the store and I stand in a line
Then I wait and I wait until everyone's through
So then I can purchase my gloppity glue.

It comes into season each year in the fall
I should probably tell you its not glue at all
It tastes like a mixture of pine tree and a fence
With a nutty aroma if it makes any sense

At the grocery store register I try not to be rude Because nobody ever buys gloppity food If they ask I'll not tell what I'm buying it for I pay them and quickly slip out the front door

At home I unwrap my fresh gloppity glue
It's green and it's purple when you open it new
And dump it all in to the treat that I'm cooking
But I always do this when there's nobody looking

Cuz there's people out there who are quite overzealous Who would steal the idea 'cuz it makes them so jealous That they'd sell our fine recipe for zillions of bucks And deliver it to grocery stores loaded on trucks

Then we fire the oven to a million degrees!

And cover the top with nuts, honey and cheese

And then when they're done (and it does take a while) We'll smell them and then pull them out with a smile

And then we'll eat cookies! I'll share them with you! Cookies taste great made from Gloppity Glue!

I Stole This Poem

I stole this poem, yes I did It isn't mine to publish But every word I write myself On paper reads like rubbish.

This gem says all I want and more It shines my beacon bright It's everything I would have said If I knew how to write.

Women, gold and accolades May rain down from the sky I deserve to taste these things Just once before I die.

I stole this poem, yes I did To my eternal shame I pierce my conscience with my pen And sign my bloody name.

(Inspired by 'STEAL THIS POEM' by Brian Mayo)

Imagine The Monkeys

Imagine the monkeys were once paid a visit This isn't too hard to imagine, now is it? A great race of travellers, barely alive. Needed a home for their species to thrive.

Fleeing the death their own dying planet
Such a thing never could happen, but can it?
Flying on desperately searching through space
For a new home with time the opponent they face

They alone found the earth a most beautiful blue Not ideal by a stretch but perhaps it would do. One problem they knew very well in advance The earth represented their very last chance

Distinctly alone they would never be found with no other life bearing planets around.

And nowhere to go if their best efforts failed

They knew all the risks and just what they entailed

The climate too harsh they found when they arrived To go it alone they would never survive.

They needed a host of indigenous creatures

The primates were picked for their promising features

With strong hands and bones and some skills that were mental they weren't too bright but they did have potential In groups they could move with considerable speed and a lusting for lifethat could border on greed.

And as a contingency if primates should fail
The travellers mixed genes with the dolphin and whale.
But deep in the humans the travelers desire
To grow and adapt and it burned them like fire

Music and dancing and art of all kinds
Were the greatest of gifts from the travelers minds
And language to speak what they feel and they see
We're all things the travelers offered for free.

Humans on earth were so new, and quite strange was the conscious desire to grow and to change. The gene blending efforts took millions of years but blossoming life quelled travellers fears.

The humans remembered they came from the sky And prayed that they'd go there again when they die. Though thriving on earth humans never fit in Building boxes to shield from the rain and the wind

Deep down the earth wasn't still quite their own.
The boxes felt more like the travellers home.
From the boxes grew cities with no earthly purpose
Appearing like cancers upon the earth's surface

Then an exciting but crueler twist still
Energy captured they bent to their will
Evolving on earth with their altered biology
They blinded the earth with a burst of technology

But humans all still loved the flowers and greens Mountains and sunsets and forests and streams But for all of the nature they seemed to enjoy Each move that they made only seemed to destroy

For the travelers could always create without cost but mixed with the monkeys this talent was lost Like music and poetry language and song But day to day living was terribly wrong

They ate and they used and consumed and depleted And wasted all that which was more than they needed The travellers called to the humans in spirit Heard by the few who are willing to hear it.

Deep in your spirit we've left you our song We've warned you for years and you know that its wrong You must stop destruction you must stop the greed You must stop confusing your wants with your needs

In love with your weapons and hate you attack

Consume and destroy and you never gave back. After this planet you won't find another This planet is sacred. This planet's' your mother.

The voices of reason did naught but annoy
The masses monkeys who live to destroy
Imagine these monkeys too foolish to know
that they're killing their planet with nowhere to go.

Inner Free

smoky eyes that swirl and flow caress the mind alluring calling whisper me I yearn to know a secret that may stop me falling

failing hands
mad dreams pursue
the smell is sweet
the taste is new
imprisoned lie
released is true
my tangled heart
still longs for you

hidden seeds in evergreen in darkened woods she's hiding waiting forbidden deeds though never seen the inner free intoxicating

dancing flames
in nightly view
entwine the mind
with spirit too
brittle flesh
just passing through
cast as glass
i sail to you

Locked

Gone for so long You can't reappear And act like you did When you used to live here

At the door of my heart You may stand there and knock Still holding a key But I've since changed the lock.

Love-Lution

Can we still talk of love after so many years?

Can we still call it love after so many tears?

What can we call it when love has grown cold?

Is it still the same love even when we grow old?

Mother

" Mother & quot;, we asked " Are you dying today? & quot;

I'm under the weather, but I'll be ok."

"Oh Mother! " we cried "We all need you alive".

"I'll be just fine but you might not survive."

Pacific

You let me down o docile ocean
I needed so your raging wind
White capped waves
And frozen spray
To chill and numb my pain within

Sunshine warm and breeze is soft Gentle tides that know no speed Lapping waves that lick the shore Perhaps you give me all I need.

Perspective

A tree in my garden I've loved all my life I sun it by day and I water at night

So one day I asked it And asked so polite Excuse me but why do you lean to the right?

On my trunk said the tree You may see a small cleft But you're on the wrong side And I lean to the left

And also quite straight
At o'clock three or nine
So when you look correctly
I'm perfectly fine.

Played With Fire

I played with fire with my fingers
It burned too close the pain still lingers

I played with fire with my arm and brought myself to greater harm

I played with fire with my mind burned my conscience most unkind

what truly made me fall apart I played with fire with my heart

Reaching Back

reaching back through years to youth from longing heart with weathered hands to caves that echo golden loves and pleasures of life's great demand

crawling through the wreck of time o'er wastelands cast imprisoned years the endless tundra's lonely song begs windburned eyes for frozen tears

ages gone cool waters lush through fertile flowing gorges run where lady fingers' gentle dew still beckons in the morning sun

passion yields to time all love as beauty fades in slow decay the finest flowers bloom atop the mountains at each close of day

Recovery

A standing wall that crumbles cracks
Breaks and tumbles falling back
A faded sign two words 'For Rent'
Entombed and crushed in cold cement
The final ruins brittle, hollow
Bitter pill for Earth to swallow

Once a beauty in her prime
On heavens dance floor measured time
Spinning once each day anew
Showing off her finest view
Of teeming life her ocean, land
With snowcapped mountains, burning sand

Fueled by pompous pride worked harder
To produce a race she thought was smarter
Bestowed with great intelligence
To voice her grace, magnificence
Surrounded by her shining seas
The envy the galaxies

Paths of grandeuresque delusion
Meet their logical conclusion
Infernal race they chewed her skin
Carved her face and dug within
Her lines etched deep she showed her age
That one quick death blow did assuage

Her scornful sun in rueful woe
Beholds now poisoned rivers flow
With barren rock she stares at death
As shame still chokes each shallow breath
The evil race so bold and clever
Defeated dead and gone forever

Great falls find where pride doth go Recovery be hard and slow Wisened wings emerge and spread To blanket deep the ugly dead With richer soil bluer seas Whitened sands and taller trees

Fresher air and cleaner skies
Earth re-opens humbled eyes
The broken walls and rent unpaid
And footprint stains begin to fade
Reminders of the race of men
Mistake that won't be made again.

Seasoned Love

Spring is here again anew Yet vibrant greens shade faded blues I lost my love in winters chill The sting and cold I feel it still

To make one love by will or force Is pushing string uphill of course Love and pain by time or fate Stubbornly won't separate

It started o'er a year ago
With passion only lovers know
Unbridled fire blinding light
Warmed us through the winter night

Ice it melted spring it bloomed From loving nights we slept till noon O'er endless seas we sailed forever On woven winds entwined together

In summertime's warm sand and sea
I prayed love not abandon me
But through the weeks and day to day
I slowly felt love slip away

In autumn colors' magic hue
We briefly felt romance renew
But as dying leaves raked from the lawn
Our love we had was all but gone

In wintertime we had a fight
Our rage and hate spewed through the night
And no more could we feel the same
With hearts too cold to light a flame

With nothing left but ash and dust Of burned out love then part we must The love was dead our bird had flown We cried and hugged and left alone. With no defense from winters cold
I felt the age I felt the old
I missed the love I missed my friend
Until I felt the spring again

Back from black and frozen haze I know now sad but sunny days So turning from my odd reflection I plan to choose a new direction

So many paths! But which to take? Dare I risk a new mistake? The spring is here and weather fair And every road can take me where

The love ignites the broken spirit Eyes can see and ears can hear it Broken hearts can always mend And seasoned love can bloom again.

The Bravest Step

One night from dreaming I awoke And pondered 'til the dawn The pages read the night before and road my life was on

I heard a voice was calling So familiar was its song I listened carefully to hear But quickly it was gone.

A lover and a dreamer I
Adore the tales of old
Of travelers and warriors
And of kings and queens and gold

For passion love and glory And adventure I would roam Yet fear of failure, loss and change Still chains me to my home.

I turned to courage of the brave Who'd rather, in my book Regret the actions that they take Than those they never took

Dare I step upon the road And former life forsake? The first step is the bravest step And hardest one to take.

In my heart the feeling grew And idea in my mind Dare I leave my lover true and former life behind?

Feardom versus freedom
Was the war so being waged
The rugged sail and hardened trail
Or comforts of a cage.

For the courage searched I deep My heart so placed a bet Intrepid brave and true you are So live without regret!

My fate was so decided
I believed it to my core
My hardest and my bravest step
Was taken out the door.

From oceans to the highest peaks I'm searching for a view
Of rushing rivers burning deserts
Feeling something new

To my heros I'm committed And in whose ways I'm set Only things I've done or do are things I may regret.

Fatigue and age may slow my steps I ever journey on Does my love dream of me still The ages I've been gone?

Though wind and rain, the rough terrain And cold may leave me sore
The hardest and the bravest step was taken out the door.

The Dream

THE DREAM

When I lay me down to sleep
I see her face appear and then
Within the dream I ask implore and
beg her please don't come again

She can't be here
It's been so long
Her haunting stare
The timings wrong
The pain remains
The love is gone
I need new dreams
I must move on

Black the sky within the dream Paints my mind the ghostly pale Apparition bound to speak In silence of the dreamers jail

It reappears
I can't estrange
So familiar
yet so strange
Her warmth her heart
Are out of range
I'm older now
My life has changed

The Dream (Part 2)

Another night the dream so feared My mind knew well my heart unwise Before the dawn she reappeared Yet eagerly I sought her eyes

It still felt wrong
My conscience burned
So gliding near
My heart It yearned
Forgave forgot
But never learned
I so indulged
As hope returned

Knowing not the dreamers fate Seduced by memories so real Where heaven haunts so hell awaits A cut so deep can never heal

Her face it froze
Cruel walls disguised
Emerged collapsed
And crystallized
Suspended hung
In dreams of men
What once was found
Is lost again

The Hellhound

Temptation the hellhound is hunting me down as I dodge through the woods backyards, alleys and streets

On my own best behavior I search for a savior from haunting reminders of failures and cheats

Whether numbing of pain or avoidance of shame temptation is truly life's greatest exam

Though I do what I should and I try to be good temptation the hellhound will find where I am.

The Idea

Condensed to a drop just a thought or idea Connecting and sliding and drifting and streaming

Commenced at the top where it's pure and it's clear Rolling releasing and falling and dreaming

Shattered on impact splattered and screaming Rivulets rapids are whipped washed and and swirled

Gathered by wisdom and flowing emotion Roars to the ocean and changes the world.

The Mile

i walked a mile in her shoes (but where they led i'll nary tell) and not the same i'll ever be (alas they hurt my feet as well!)

The Missing Piece

I think I've lost a piece of me I'm not sure just where to find it. I've looked around reality without the nerve to look behind it

It's like an itch that can't be scratched a limb that can't be reattached a hole so big it can't be patched a fish escaped but not unhooked

Peeling back the veil of real reveals the piece and more it does forgotten dreams and fantasies of who I think I thought I was

My sins of youth left unabsolved mysteries of my life unsolved wasted love withheld, dissolved I wish now I had never looked.

The Secret Room

there's a place in my heart only you know where no one else will ever go. that no one else could ever find. an attic deep within my mind

you don't go there anymore each day I dust and sweep the floor so you'll always have a place to be if ever you return to me.

The Soldier

I pity the soldier but not with derision too young so alone shouldn't make the decision

Untold the true reasons unable to choose just whose interests he'll serve for whose life he may lose

We're fighting for freedom! he's taught to believe but from foreign oppressors not hard to achieve

So he fights against terror and an evil temptation with God on the side of the world's greatest nation

On far away threats he drops bombs by the drone while the real danger's very much closer to home

More often than not the young soldier is poor yet the wealthy make quite a fine living at war

Thus henceforth expect that the wars shall not cease 'til we make the rich fight just to watch them make peace.

The Voice

be afraid
be quite afraid
a voice from deep inside me said
paralyzed though you may be
you won't be hurt you won't be dead

just stay here
embrace the fear
some lessons need you not to learn
self-preserved your pride may heal
your heart will beat that's my concern

trust in me
yes just in me
your saving grace your last defense
you'll never taste the sting, defeat
nor face the losers consequence

nor ridicule
e'er such the fool
protect i will from unseen threats
your reputation's brittle shell
embarrassment looms worse than death

you'll grow old so very old when tales are tall your yarns are spun adventures, heroisms, hopes and dreams of things you wish you'd done

i am afraid yes quite afraid the song of fear it tempts my choice though frozen sick and hollow, weak i face my fear and kill the voice

The Word

i die todayi know i willwhat's said can never be unheard

kill my body though they may they cannot touch my precious word

in the beginning was the word now near the end my flaming sword

is wielded high both strong and free and justifies my life's reward

The World War

raging roaring rolling waves white knuckles rise above the shelf crash upon the palisades the ocean fights the land herself

blow by blow the hammers smash a face of stone to grains of sand persistence and the gift of time the ocean shall defeat the land

This Old Man

This old man named Balco He lived down the stair With old fashioned trousers And thinning white hair

He scares me a little
When he bids me good day
I reply a quick 'hi'
And then soon fly away

But there's something about him Not quite so unpleasant. He hails from our history And is lost in our present

He can't keep his feet On an earth that spins fast And says he knows not how much longer he'll last

He beckoned me hither so I sit beside him He told me of games You don't have to plug in

Of leaping and jumping But not on a team. And not for a sport But to live in a dream

To catch and to run and to Stand brave and true
To hide and reveal
And to flee and pursue

To dive and to soar
And to crash burn and then
to rise and recover
And fly once again

I started to envy
This world that emerged
In my mind, through his stories
Past and present converged

Perhaps a dirt path
May be better than pavement
And fresh air preferred to
Electronic enslavement

Now I see with our progress Comes a price we must pay From our soul like a tax To an age and a day

And may we too be lost And what will be the toll When we too like Balco Are unbalanced and old

When old Balco expires
Will the world lose this song?
From memory to legend to myth
And then gone?

We cannot go backward
To hang not we must hope
Mother nature we know
Gives us plenty of rope

Our children must know From the moment of birth What it means to be free And connected with earth.

This old man
He gave me a gift from the past
Let's see just how long
This great lesson will last.

Train (A Love Story)

I once fell in love
On the back of a train
Through the urban decay
Of a city in pain

I rode this strange city
On steel rails unknown
Past buildings and neighborhoods
Far from my home

Her eyes. Oh the eyes And the hair that fell by And a smile that could warm the Lake Michigan sky.

An ethereal countenance As the sun lights the day When our eyes locked she smiled Then looked quickly away.

Forgive me now
For I cannot express
The beauty I saw
In her face and her dress

And those eyes how they pierced me Both streetwise and smart With an aura of crystal That burned in my heart

Yet all of my calm cool collected demeanor
Simply froze my mouth shut
If you just could have seen her

You'd know all my feelings wrapped up in one word But between us the railway Was all to be heard.

I appeared calm I'm sure, But my mouth simply failed I was frozen and weak And the silence prevailed.

And where to begin?
I mean what do you say
When you're out of your league
And the time ticks away

But then the train stopped And more people got on A bunch of street kids And the moment was gone

Would you be my girlfriend?
A teenager asked
It shamed me a little
'Sure honey' she laughed

She was too cool for words But my chance it was lost And with one last sly grin She then rose to get off

As if sailing away
My dreams following her
I don't even know in the town
where we were

But what did she feel?
Through that dark city chill
And what did she see?
Does she think of me still?

Did we share the same dream Did she also regret? Or perhaps that was good as it ever would get.

This love it was pure

True and cut like a knife But I'm grateful she spent that brief time in my life.

Undying Love

i once knew love that wouldn't die it lived and loved but lived a lie to leave this love i had to try i lied to love i know not why

i tried to love i tried to leave the lie i told did she believe to she an angel from above i told a lie she gave her love

my own love grew to my surprise blooming so amidst my lies love flourished so i thought best to keep truth closer to the vest

this hidden truth you may have guessed did wrap itself around my chest my heart it grew the truth grew tight my conscience cost me sleep at night

once i started to relax i woke to venomous attacks the dancing truth it laughed with glee her hateful rage poured over me

my flaccid words tried to explain i never meant to cause her pain Imploring her with tears i cried that only for her love i lied

she left with all her love she gave i mourned the love i could not save this ghoul of love yet lives in death. it grips my heart it chokes my breath

undying love beget from sin lies rotting, putrid deep within i lied to love deserve do i to bear the love that will not die?

Visions

I have these visions clear as day that don't come to fruition

Perhaps not visions only dreams reflect my mind's ambition

Perhaps not dreams but wishful thoughts that yield to indecision

As wishful thoughts don't offer hope
I choose to dream my vision.

Who Are You?

who are you
without a name
without a face
without a voice
without a clue
without a claim
without a race
without a choice?

Worthy

is my life worthy of a song my deeds a verse my thoughts a word

my daily rites may equal wrong my silent curse is never heard