

Poetry Series

**Tom Priestley**  
**- poems -**

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Tom Priestley()

#

The rival is screaming about freedom  
There are no morals here  
just scary monsters  
The possibilities are limitless  
But they don't concern you  
You may think I have no grasp  
But I can throw a mean punch  
Against the bullies that disturb my sleep  
What is here for you but fragmented dreams?  
As the Guatemalan worry people die from their smokes  
Because the cold air fools them into constant exhalation  
Don't be a fool  
Be a creep instead

Tom Priestley

# As It Should Be

We did it  
You and me  
We drank in every bar  
fought in every ring  
And praised the ground beneath our aching feet  
Now you're broken  
Like I once was  
But I have no advice  
No way of making you believe you're special  
All we need to do is keep on fighting  
Keep hoping  
That soon enough we'll win  
We'll get to where we're going with our heads held high  
And our souls at peace  
As it should be

Tom Priestley

# Booze Is A Symphony

I feel that old magic  
That old surge of emotions  
The gods shield has left me  
the toughness that I gained  
In the right time  
and in the right place has been lost  
Strip it down  
Paint in black and white  
Don't write like the others  
Just write like yourself  
That's what I hear  
But myself was left in the bar  
Waiting for a barmaid  
To get her shit together and take me home  
To her shared flat full of dreamers  
and cheap booze  
Where the rent is always needed  
and a person becomes obsolete  
That old magic ceases in those moments  
That adventure of the empty page is wasted  
on some bumbling view of the world  
While sharing a joint and talking to strangers  
Who say I have the right vies but not the same opinions  
I should have stayed in that bar  
With the drunks  
And the rotting animals of the dark wind  
Rather than here  
Feeling that old magic  
and having nothing to say

Tom Priestley

# Broadway

Phlegm in the coffee  
Air conditioning in the soup  
Formica in the lobby  
Where the wallpaper droops  
Cement in the toilet  
And bins in the lift  
There's no use in complaining  
Because your platitudes are shit  
As shit as the shit down the hall  
Where the test tube born contractor  
Had himself a ball  
With a paint roller and zip gun  
He's as ad as the overly insane commuting nun  
Who complains about my smoking  
And demeanor in general  
Lost in the loading bay  
Stuck on the bus  
It's getting harder to earn a wage  
But why should I be fussed?  
When there's aspirin in the pot noodle  
And ruffelin in the doorway  
I just saw someone shoot a poodle  
On my way to Broadway

Tom Priestley

# Canyons

Vulgarity is dependent on the ownership of offence, heralded by someone who seeks to rid the world of foulness due to their own sensitivity.

Are you offended by my actions?

My foul language?

Or some of the other disgusting habits I imitate whether in public or at home? In the street? Or in bed?

As say the way that I am offended by your manners, taste and other proclivities that I have not yet inhabited myself.

If so then we're even

Toe to toe

Free to explore the other traits of human instability like soldiers of nature, sleepless in the valley, watchful of the ever changing sky and illuminated by the innovations of ones mind that ponders over the subject of death in neurotic bursts of wanting to know all of the world and it's extremities.

I seek refuge in these thoughts, in the actions I take with my pen, then become forced to shut down and immobile like a tin man in need of oiling.

If only such action could be taken when the brain stalls and the nerves are shot when just in the full throw of exertion, like the deep breathe of the morning only to cough and splutter and light a cigarette.

I am damned just like you are my friend, but there is a bigger price on my head.

A large sum that will keep a soul in laughter and stature for decades to come

But the bounty hasn't waned and the hunter hasn't made his attempt, so who knows when they'll actually find me.

Slaughter the ugly ducklings

Pick the flowers of beauty like death chooses the soul of goodness  
Exterminate all the brutes and sail away with thoughts of glory that you'll endure within the next stem of livelihood, after you've unsaddled yourself with the lumbering's and stigmas that childhood dishes out in mass hysteria.

There is no more fear but that of the uncertain future.

Tom Priestley

# Days With A Gun

'Climb on top of the hill'

I heard a voice scream

'Follow me up the mountain, there is no danger up here'

And I followed

Like a child follows his father into the street

After enduring more embitterment from his alcohol prone mother

Someday the door will close

Someday the wind will blow you back down the steep walkaway and back into the city

While at other times you may see a man walk out of his front door with a gun in his hand

With the look in his eyes that shows without a doubt he knows what he's doing

And he knows what needs to be done

Tom Priestley

# Dirty Napkins

Same old thing  
With brand new financiers  
Don't take me to your side  
Don't stand from your seat when I enter the room  
I'm empty because of this quest  
You  
The haunted one  
The last of your breed  
Trapped in the whirlwind have shot me down  
As the ex teacher becomes a DJ  
And another bartender turns to writing prose on dirty napkins  
To satisfy the ugly barmaid with a grudge

Tom Priestley

# Goon Squad

Major me is mesmerized by the eazee dawn  
There's a black cloud taking the form of a dying star  
As the futuristic payment leaves us penniless  
As we walk the streets looking for a drunk to roll  
Your big, bland ballad has left me cheering for the death of Bambi's mother  
As the Goon Squad pay me a visit  
And offer me a gift of broken pretzels and used book tokens  
That they tried to pawn off on the whores in the arcade

Tom Priestley

# Hypocrite

Your qualities are peculiar  
I can't tell if you're fake or translucent  
I can't stand your humor  
I hate you/ I love you  
Even though I'm reminded of a tumor  
I hope the bus you're on swerves into a ditch  
Your house burns down  
And you suffer hatred from your kids  
I can't wait to see you  
When we're alone  
You make my life worth living  
Even though my plan is to go  
In the dead of night  
When you ain't around  
I can't let you go  
But I'll give it a try  
I suffer with flashbacks  
This dinner tastes like shit  
There's no use in pretending  
When you're a hypocrite  
Your smile is deranged  
I think I see a crack  
My memories become strained  
And I fear you'll stab me in the back  
Don't be gone too long  
I must see you before the brain switches off  
There must be something wrong  
Because I feel you when I cough  
Your love is like an air raid siren  
It makes me duck for cover  
You need yourself a Tyre iron  
Not another lover  
There must be something in the water  
I'm sure I felt lightning hit  
You claim to be someones daughter  
There's no use in pretending when you're a hypocrite

Tom Priestley

# I Made A Mistake

I sat with a drink as that beer shit brewed and I lifted up my right  
cheek to fart

But I made a mistake, it felt like a velvet hand been removed from a  
glove

As I rushed to the bathroom and unloaded on the unassuming porcelain  
seat

I wiped

Using half a roll of a dead tree

And proceeded to the bedroom to change my trousers

An hour later I felt the same surge and taking no chances I rushed to the  
bathroom only to realize the humiliation of hearing an echo of air  
reverberating in the void

Tom Priestley

# Messages

Running scared like the lonely ones  
No concept of time  
Unsure of which shoe goes on which foot  
Or which knife to wield the glimmering knife around in  
We've got a message from the ashes  
We've got our orders  
Plastered on the side of buses  
Space needs a man of action  
To defeat whatever threat we're lumbered with next  
I need you  
But you don't need me

Tom Priestley

# Metro

An audacious search through dirty letters  
Truthful declarations  
And articles about bed-wetters  
Voraciously engrossed  
By stories of near death escapees  
Cheating philanderers  
And daily peeves  
The styles in the title  
Of the newly appointed hot press  
They even rubbish the Council  
Needless to say I'm impressed  
I read with vigor and delight  
As the signal reminds me  
This is my stop to go  
I nearly dropped with fright  
When I discovered I left the bus without my Metro

Tom Priestley

# Modern Culture

The revolutionary hitman  
The pseudo Symmetrical drunk punk  
Who lies in wait by the tower houses  
Of last nights raid  
The ravers and misbehaviours  
Attack me with bottle caps  
As I find a fresh batch of pricing stickers  
Along the arm of my cherished overcoat  
This joke has turned deadly  
The threats have become whispered nothings  
As the psycho cycle newspaper tarts  
Roll their cameras and the dead eyed waterheads  
Line up to salivate and gape  
At the irreverent past times of modern culture

Tom Priestley

# My Imaginary Friend Is Trying To Kill Me

A game of chess where I always win  
He plays guitar and I sing  
A faithful comrade no one can see  
Please help My imaginary friend is trying to kill me!  
He's with me all the time  
And for a while we got on fine  
Tide together in ominous glee  
But now I fear my imaginary friend is trying to kill me!  
More dependable than a household pet  
There with a drink and a tip on a bet  
A sparring partner that doesn't bleed  
My imaginary friend is trying to kill me!  
The doctors say he's a figment of my imagination  
But everyone needs a friend to ease their frustration  
I have a sneaking suspicion he's jealous of me  
Please help my imaginary friend is trying to kill me!  
A needles sting and chained to the bed  
Might rid him away from my rotting head  
I wish that you all could see  
That my fucking imaginary friend is trying to kill me!

Tom Priestley

# New Worlds

There are other worlds far more beautiful than this  
Worlds filled with valor, honor, corruption and romance  
Seedy, violent escapades that embitter the souls of men and women  
That are in constant search of new worlds  
New lands for harvesting the enrichment of heaven and the decadence of hell  
Progeny of sin  
Enchantments in the dirty alleyways  
Murder  
Hatred  
The holy, blissful martyrs of indulgence  
It's all here for you in the covers  
Lock the door and throw away the key

Tom Priestley

# No Joy

Here is your playground  
A piece of history  
Spat out to reveal council estates  
All night gold emporiums  
War paraphernalia  
Factory fodder and time wasted  
On warm beer  
Scrubbers seeking a ring and a child  
To escape from parenthood  
No replies from the exciting world  
That is far away  
No joy from friends  
Just hate jackets and retarded slums  
This electric circus breaks apart the quiet night  
As we say goodbye to the landscape  
And play in blue rooms  
And discarded empty buildings  
Searching for the loss of happiness with naive smiles  
And muffled expectations  
That is something worthwhile

Tom Priestley

# Polythene Straightjacket

There is a myriad of possibility  
For you to become stricken by poverty  
To find yourself one day comin the aisles  
Of discount food outlets  
Searching the iron bins  
For that usmoked cigarettes  
While praying to God that someone left a bag of cash  
In the doorway of your home  
Don't rule out the decadence that awaits  
After that one bad turn  
It might just be your undoing  
And drive you to the fitted jacket  
And polythene bag

Tom Priestley

# The Big Noir

The stink of romance on the bed  
The caballeros waiting in the ashtray  
The ninety degree pipes turn red  
And two tone lotharios sweep away  
The good natured heart of the whore  
Who stuck her face in a fist  
And pulled up and wept by the door  
The neighbours paint disease on the walls  
The new assassin shoots to kill  
Covered in cartoons and overalls  
Using catchphrases from pulp and Bogart stills  
Their lives a mystery  
A cliché  
A yarn  
Cigarettes stapled to their lips  
With noir quips and dirty scars  
A detective in the lobby  
A gambler in the backroom  
While a damsel asks a favour for money  
And the cops give the broom to the starlight junky  
With five kids and railroad tracks  
No food  
No nothing  
With a wife who doesn't want him back  
Hate in the corridors  
And a black and white life  
Filled with drunks and the guilty  
Who'll never get caught without a fight  
The usual suspects lined in a row  
Pulling guns  
Pulling faces  
Falling in love  
And knowing sometime they'll have to go

Tom Priestley

# The Human Ashtray

Smoke on a chain  
Even in the rain  
Fingers with yellow stains  
Two minutes and I'm off again

The human ashtray strikes again!

A no smoking sign  
Can't read because I'm temporarily blind  
From the grey and purple haze in my mind  
While docking leads to a huge fine

The human ashtray strikes again!

Duty frees and obsession  
One after the other in succession  
One or the others possession  
That smell needs not to be questioned

The human ashtray strikes again!

All day long with hook in mouth  
A blast of warmth and then I'm out  
Reading warning labels that scream and shout  
About the perils of this glorious bout

The human ashtray strikes again!

Another year is prized to go  
Everytime I light the overfilled zippo  
It's healthier than smack and cheaper than blow  
This poem ends with what you already know

The human ashtray strikes again!

Tom Priestley

# The Same Disease

Creativity is a sickness to which there is no cure  
Even if the creative spirit is not prolific enough  
To churn out multitudes of artistry upon the world  
The sickness still manifests itself  
Staying silent for a while until it escapes  
Until it forces it's way out of ones being  
To be given to the people  
The hearts and souls of the universe  
Until the sickness infects them  
Until we're all purging ourselves  
Of the creative masses  
That regulate the same disease again and again

Tom Priestley

# This Is

You could have been a killer  
But you never learnt to wipe the blood from your hands properly  
This whole situation bugs me  
As I find a microphone to scream down  
You wanted my attention  
But instead I locked you in a room filled with dangerous fire  
That crawled up the walls  
And clawed at your pretty hair  
This is a gun  
And you're going down

Tom Priestley

# What?

Let's call it a draw  
Or in fact call it quits  
There are headaches upon headaches  
And crackers along the floor  
Your estimations and degradements  
Make my siblings feel like shit  
Keep your stink away from me  
Or at least keep it locked behind a door  
There is nothing more to say  
Then wanting is for nothing  
And what should I want for?

Tom Priestley