

Poetry Series

Tony Noon
- poems -



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Publication Date:

2024

Publisher:

Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

Tony Noon()

Lives in Mexborough, South Yorkshire.

Poems have appeared widely in magazines and anthologies, notably Acumen and Envoi, and in local and national press.

A former Bridport prize winner, Noon has a growing digital audience on platforms including Poem Hunter, AllPoetry, Scriggler, The Blue Hour and The Camel Saloon.



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Terraced Houses On The Hill

Baptised by early rain
they face up to light.
Upright as old pianos,
kettles boil all day long
while white nets gleam.

One day finer minds
might correlate them
with defunct chapels;
might seek out the lost
people and ask aloud

if the risen sun had
called them to glory.

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Show Don't Tell

The curvy line was in the sand
etched with a stick in his left hand

That's a snake is what he said.
The story starts here at the head.

Along the middle words abound,
and this is where the clues are found.

Just down here, around that bend
the tail's in sight and that's the end.

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Bench

A postulation. These poets,
scrummed-down, establishing
the order of things. Focused

in the lineout they are sure
they can gain and retain
control. Certain they will try.

They are on and then gone
leaving benches wanting
and the creaking piety of saints.

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Pontoon

You know how it is.

Turning all those cards.
Those ersatz bridges taking
you further and further away
until you remember sunlight
falling on some quiet seat,
taking you back, urging you
to find yourself and that slow

acceptance of something missing.

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The Crane And The Car And The Old Piano

How many times have we seen it.
The crane and the car
and the old piano too big for stairs.
Boxed and strapped, it is swinging.
Creaking dangerously overhead.
The elevation and death of culture
as we anticipate the crash,
crushing the car below. We saw it
with our eyes, but did we know

the piano was never in the box.

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Larkin's Photograph

Pictures paint a thousand words.
The camera never lies,
but what do portraits give away?

Truth lies behind those lenses.
The owl's almost smile belongs
to lost time. The wit belongs to us

and to the slow wry page.

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The Moon Was Shy Again Tonight

The moon was shy again tonight,
hiding behind the tall trees,
it willed us to look elsewhere
until it was prepared to shine.

The moon was shy again tonight,
slowly rising beyond fronds,
It willed us to see romance
then dominated the whole sky.

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Green Sizzle Sold

Newton gave us half a tale.
That apple didn't simply fall.

Not born to hang around
it was attracted to earth

by pleasant surroundings
and an opportunity for growth.

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Small Things

Fizz and Bang we called it.
Revolving around each other
like binary stars they drew
the curriculum across the year.

My ignorance of fizz made
quite a bang when I failed
to record the temperature
of a blue bunsen flame.

Our lack of other knowledge
let us play bench top games
with mercury balls before we
rolled them haphazardly into

bins, not caring for the effects
of cause which would cordon
and control us now. For sure
there would be prices to pay.

Exiled outside the classical,
I dwelt in alternative streams
where language fuels absurdity
and images hide true meaning.

When I write now of nuts
there may be bigger pictures
but step back and look again.
Small things always happen.

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Fallen

Not a corridor then,
this small passage
where time drains
rhetoric's lifeblood.

All those late hours
and heated debates
reduced to this box.
Past over to the many.

Amongst these bones
a future lies like runes.
The shape of the next
epitaph is shimmering.

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Pantomime

Mister E, Master of Allusion.
His meaning hid in full view.
His references were out of sight
till the force was directly behind you.

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Unmapped Roads

The cat was lifeless by the road.

It's essence was left in mid air
when it's trajectory was intercepted.
All it's plans and purposes ended.
Stolen by the passing moment

Our intercepted trajectories disturb
the air, patterns diffusing quickly to leave
any questions we raised lying
by unmapped roads with no end in sight.

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Pecking Order

I am watching the pigeons
brawling on brash cobbles,
dismantling crumbs from
take away food fallen from
graceless fingers.

This miscreant communion
is discouraged but folk like
to see the kids herding roughly.
An unprompted mystery play
demonstrating a way of things.

Showing who chases and who is chased.

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Poem For Synthesised Voice

There is sound here but no light.
Words mimicked with skill
are their own purpose
repeated rhythmically to browsers.

The meaning is between the lines.

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Marley's Notes

Those clanks and moans;
pure theatre for les autres.
Without the chains we are
listless. Creatures of air.
The links we forge do
bind but in holding down
they also lead us home.

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The Jupiter Perspective

If you could see these lines
in three dimensions
you would see the space
between thoughts composed
in thick air and hung out to dry.

You would see my drafts hanging
like post-it notes on branches,
sunlight charming life or burning
them to illegible crisps and
discarded from the harvest.

Comprehension requires four.
Meaning may need an effort.
You have to juggle perspective
in space and time to see
the small things are big. Huge

like a morning star. Like Jupiter.

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Intact

There is no science to follow here.

There is just observation.
Eyelines free to roam, to ponder
what is hidden behind masks.

Unseen mouths draw glances
as if dangerous words have been
defused or softened by layers.

Leaving first impressions intact.

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Curating The Clean Age

Plato would have got it.
How whole lives can be lived
inside four walls while shadows
dance uncontrollably outside.

Out here dark and peopleless
streets are full of noise. Drains
gush and the tyres of boy racers
squeal unchallenged by the good.

We are between something.
Our rich past holds us down.
A half ship, torn in two, the stern
safe and full of air. The bow, broken.

Thrust forward empty, it frightens.
Dreams scattered like luggage
along deep canyons to lie
unsalvaged in the aftershock.

We must either refloat this hulk
and anchor it or leave it.
Let the tides wash indiscretions
and curate the clean age.

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Old Churches In Midwinter

Light Holes.

Our galaxies of being swirl
and swing around them
like moths, sucked in
when night is darkest.

Faith is made here or renewed.
Left on deposit as we wind home
it accumulates, extending gravity
until an unexpected shining
calls us in.

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Hobos

Somewhere on your dusty road
you crossed over;
left Woodstock for The Twilight Zone
to roll up and smoke into our late
summer like broken wind.

No love and peace, no names.
No pack drill from our corner.
Uptight under canvas we were
upright enough to chill your
cider with polite refusals.

We blew you out and when
you had been given
the bums' rush by the commissars
you picked up your blanket
and your old dog and hit
the highway back into history.

Sometime after dark and over
appropriate bar tables
we talked you onto beaches
or laughed you under hedgerows
and I breathed easier
because no one knew
I used to sing the same songs.

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After The Bone Fires

Rake them. Riddle sticks
through cooling embers.
Beds and books burnt
to blackened crisps.
Yesterday's news and the lost
wisdom of authors left
like Gideon Bibles.

All extinguished here,
odd phrases quivering
in the updraft like skydivers
fiddling with cords.
These thin words
would crumple if touched,
their essence lost to flame

A history of gunpowder
hangs around here
like drunks after parties,
filling nostrils with remorse
for exploded peace

In our sad afterglow
the smoke is tasteless.
Did the fire turn back night?
Was wrath appeased by
strained fibres cracking?
Did this sacrifice
of stuffed effigies

save our souls?

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Gleam

By the time you read this I will be miles away.
Not miles. That doesn't do justice.
I will be an immensity away. Let me explain.

Throughout your lives I was there for you
but never knew you, could never know you.
I was long gone before any of you were born

But I have reflected often, and you,
clever things, found ways to exploit me.
Found ways to harness my exhaust.

Time in a bottle is a neat trick
but don't show me the snapshots.

Your entire being is a done deal.
Your maudlin histories are alien to me.

I am ahead of the curve.
Riding the wave and it matters
little to me what lies ahead.

The journey is it's own reward.

Luckily for you there is no end in sight.

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Belonging To Air

As usual it begins with death.

Cops tearing around quiet corners
in hot pursuit of themselves.
Across the way is cordoned
while they chip away.
Our past bagged and stripped
.

Flashback to the young trees.
We thought it was over
for the first time and
our sun shone every day.

There were windows then,
behind which Mr Walford
caned boys caught inside,
as if his room was hallowed.

Not personal. Boys belonged
to air in those lost long lunches.

Across the way now
cards are marked.
Death is on the table.
More transformative,
than plain brown bread,
but with walls gone
where will our histories echo.

When this dust settles
can anything new begin.

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The Entertainer

He was playing a Joplin Rag.
Playing the first few bars
over and over.
As if he couldn't move on.
As if he didn't want us to move on.

Back home with the sheets
He would take us A to Z.
The whole history
of the bordello.
Small hours reeling
under forty watts.

Here, where memory shrugs
by the far wall,
he had to go with what he knew.
Had to keep on playing
what he knew.

In my mind, he is playing still.
No less but never more
than I remember.
At the table of ghosts we listen.

Measuring lives. Marking time.

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Secrets Of Escapology

Wanting to escape is important, of course.

Surprising how many overlook this point.

Better still to stack the odds.

The rest depends how long

you can keep the audience in your corner.

Houdini couldn't walk through walls.

He almost always had a key

and once out of the box

he would read a while,

let the tension build before crashing

breathless through the screen.

When he died suddenly,

there was no time to prepare;

no chance to hide the key.

Still he kept them waiting.

Kept everyone waiting

long after the lights went up.

Wanting to escape is important, of course.

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The Circle

I see the sunny days.
The sober managers of building societies,
banks, maybe. Button bright
in their certain trajectories

I see the neat wives, shining.

Millponds of virgin tarmac
hold back trees, allowing
the long hours to hide
small dramas like bones
in lawn tidy gardens.

I see the blue sky corners.

Post Boxes, hungry for gossip,
are gateway and godsend here.
Their slow digestion filling
these avenues with promise
for days, weeks maybe,
until response confirms the circle.

I see the sunny days
in ages tailed back on broken roads;
in the weedful remnants of dead factories;
and in social media I feel I can't ignore.

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The Way To Touch A Star

Not knowing, is the way to touch a star.
Small and half empty you can believe
that across the field and up the hill
you could hold that white light
in cupped hands and believing that,
you never need to go there.
Never need to really try and touch it.

Taller and full of concepts you know
on top of the highest of high places,
even on a ladder, on a tower there
your hand would only shrivel
in cold and empty air and the stars
would seem further from you.
Worse, you know they most likely died
before our fingers learnt to point.

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The Last Revellers

This grey morning smells
of oranges and wet paper.

Bigging up the dawn chorus
forgotten tunes roost
in unborn market stalls
while damp ghosts shuffle.

Too early for coffee it is
too late to find a bar
for the last revellers.

They are their own agendas.
Immense in droplet dimensions
devised wholly for their own needs

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Returning Night Safely

We are post social here.

The music has lost but

the barman isn't worried.

He is polishing the minutes,

laying them neatly in racks

so he can get away sharpish.

Pizza to go and a six pack

chilling mean quiet midnights

and an early walk home for us.



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When this moon was ours,

we danced forever in it's craters;

made large of small talk at the rims.

Then alien day diffused our shades,

enforced a new perspective,

returning night safely to our fathers

and their sepia tone conceits.

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New England In The Fall

The cities are cooling;

debuilding themselves

as the year ripens.

Soon there will be

no towers,

no reliable terraces

cluttered with chat.

Soon there will be

no love

lost in scrap metal valleys;

no room at boarded inns.

Mirrors will be darkened

or destroyed and the ashes

of brown furniture will be

scattered at boot fairs.

Already, where pie crust

promises fell to earth,

rewritten lines have

broken through.

Cajoling us to start again from here.

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Contactless

Inside a church
laid off hands and better halves
buy favours in the righteous aisles.

Outside a store
a thin blanket woven from hope
dreams a frail woman.

Above them all
the air sings in the low evening.
Wishes collide with cash transactions,

accumulating.
Falling like pennies to light
unturned corners everywhere.

As we watch the darkness grow, no one touches.



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Broken Things

You knew these streets like a satnav,
saw them sunday best and wore their tee shirts.

Now rubble footprints kick half moved earth
and gangs of buddleia gather to heckle.

Only you are waved through.

In this no frills town you were a godsend.

Broke bread with the vanished
and drank with them from jam jars.

Week after week beneath the smog
you were a lifeline, testing vital signs.

Mending broken things.

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Autumn In The North

The railway lines are browner than ever this year
and where they still melt steel, cold air
masks productivity in shades of grey.

Below me by the portakabin an executive swaps
his suit for shorts and is soon running.
Running hell for leather from the superhighway.

Chasing the ghost of a seventies screenplay.

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Cats And Mats

They were conceptual of course.
Cats, mats, the whole shebang.
Metaphorical constructs designed
to teach the order of things.
Not real cats. Not mats you
yourself could sit on.

Now though, you have friends
or friends of friends
who see them and when you talk
in quiet corners you wonder
if maybe there really was a cat
and what the mat was made of.
You wonder why they were there.

You wonder most of all who hid
the facts behind the headline.



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