

INMATES' ODE TO A TIMEX

O marvel of the century!
Your timely precision
Presides over any decision
In my penitentiary!

A. Aloy

COMMENT

They glorify moms
and dissipate doubts
picking up a few crumbs
under beer-swilling louts
to whom nothing much matters
once novelty ceases,
Leaving daydreams in tatters
and babies in pieces.

Maurice Spiro

SAILORS' DELIGHT

The sunset has not ceased, as yet;
Table chat is clear and slow
Since none speak of what all now know.
Windowsill and lawn agleam with wet,
Jewelled by that red yet nigh,
Remaining, dying, frozen still—
Unquitting fire bathes the hill;
High in the east, the new moon's ivory eye.
City heights [as now] shall be
Blooded red as memory,
While wordless shoppers 'neath the moon
Leave stores, and work, for homes to dine at noon.

John Timmins

RICH MAN BLUES

You thought maybe there'd be a change,
Hidin' behind some new name,
But you, you're just the same,
Still, you'd knock over the lame,
Well... that's just a shame.

You're still talkin' real loud,
Sittin' mighty big on a cloud,
You don't know where it's at,
So you shouldn't talk like that,
Think maybe you'll rule the world?

How can you possibly bear,
Always hiding things everywhere,
You've never learned to be fair,
Always yelling for more than your share,
Because you don't care.

Just 'cause you're on some honour list,
Just 'cause you've a solid background,
Just 'cause we're not renowned,
Doesn't mean we'll be pushed around,
You'll not ask for more.

You think you've got the right here,
To cast revenge from any fear,
Our unconstitutional oath,
The rich or poor, it's not for both,
Well... bear that in mind.

Richard Campbell

Upon Drinking Bad Water

By Bruce Little

Three days outside of Wa-wa
waiting for a ride can get
discouraging. It's hot, there's
water nearby and even if it is
brackish, you're thirsty enough to
drink it, least I was.

Came out of that ditch with my
head reeling and feet dragging.
Could barely stand, that's when I
really needed a lift. Got my hand
up for the occasional car but that
thumb seemed to put me off
balance. All my efforts to get
straight-up and smile like a happy
way-farer were wasted.

They must have thought I was
drunk, way out there twenty miles
from the nearest gas pump.

Some slowed, gaped, honked or
shouted. One family man veered
for me. When he saw I wasn't
moving, fear came over his face,
satisfying mine.

There must be a contract
between driver and hiker formed
before the car ever pulls over. I
wasn't in a good bargaining
position. They passed me by.

You need not care about any
particular car, lots of confidence,
detached like;

"Give me a ride, if you like, but
anyone else will do," with your
thumb. That gets to them. They
don't want to be anonymous.

Finally I gave up and just sat
down on the curb. The asphalt
was sticky.

Looked down the road,
nothing. Looked at the sky, a

couple of ravens circling over
head. My laughter shocked me,
dry and high, so absent when it
ended that my situation leaped
back out at me in all its
ridiculous, massive proportions of
trees and tar.

Scanned that horizon again,
hand over eyes. No bugle,
cavalry, no Indians. Was that a
speck over there, coming...no.
Stationary. Probably a retread off
a semi.

Sat there staring down that
retread for an hour until it wasn't
one anymore. It moved, some-
times, I thought, the other way.
When it got closer I could see it
was an old man. He seemed to
float, the heat mirage off the
tarmac rose to his waist. The face
buzzed around in the air, settling
back to its equinox of features.

Flies that I'd wasted many
hours swatting had found a more
tolerant home.

What is he but mist and dung
reversed on a highway between a
cloud of heat, a mind of haze?
Shimmering, moving, constant, as
cars pass by, gone.

Watched his feet, to be sure.
When they got to where I was
they stopped. Somehow this upset
me. He sat down, smiled from
toothless jaws, silent. The flies
remained in the air, buzzing
around his former visage.

"Boy, am I glad to see you!"

