

Peter Fox



600 words per gallon

Poems 2010 – 2012

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Poems of Peter Fox 2010 – 2012

This is a collection of interesting and varied poems from tiny Trikus to seventy-line epics; deep and sad to daft and silly; throw away to think-about; parody to parable.

Generally written with strong rhythm and mostly rhyming these are typically easy to understand at first sight although many deserve closer inspection.

There is allegory as four knights fight a dragon, pathos as an Indian brave deals with the death of his wife, humour for fighting boredom in the office, current affairs to laugh at, human folly to despair over and ordinary decent poems to investigate.



Preview

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Poems

2010 -2012

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More than 45 poems and an essay for private enjoyment.

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Errand

The steady strokes of my paddle push me forward to tomorrow
Through the water in the moonlight sparks of anger waves of sorrow
Every moment I can see her
As she bravely fights the cancer
Soft in my arms my sweetest wife
Comes to the end of her short life
Now I must speed with my sad news to her family in their harbour

Not a popple on the water on this still night on my journey
Just the chuckle of my bow wave is all I have for company
Plops and ripples gently stretching
Mark the restless dreams of salmon
The forest's smell comes out to me
A darker breath of mystery
I must not pause on my errand to her family in their harbour

As the light comes off the water I see her skin like red copper.
Travelling with me by my paddle her deep dark eyes draw me under
Spirit vision clinging to me
Gazing at me in my hurry
Is she asking me to join her?
Or to speed me to her father
who needs to know of her passing from her family in their harbour

High above me shining strongly the silver moon commands the scene
Ghostly strands are sent to catch me as white-tressed mist flows in a stream
Cold clutching hands of spirit air
Blur my resolve with sharp despair
Defying them I must press on
I must arrive before the dawn
I must make haste with my message for her family in their harbour

At early dawn the aching brave finds the inlet and the harbour
He grounds his boat upon the beach and rests a moment from his labour
Feet firmly spread he breathes in long
The spirit of this place is strong
This stony shore is a gateway
To a wealth of tribal history
Ancient customs still enacted by the family in this harbour

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As the rocks reduce to rubble and the current removes the sand
The spirit of the place recalls the things that happened on this land
From the very early hunter
Who soon turned into a settler
Starving, warring, growing, crying
Generations born and dying
before the memory of the tribe of the family in this harbour

The news of death is not new. Still it's shocking for her father
He takes a minute to recall how he used to hear her laughter
How she'd play with toys he'd made her
How she'd tease the boys for ever
Sadness seems to come from pleasure
Loss of beauty that you treasure
Now she's gone to join her mother and her family in their harbour

Son come with me and let us walk along the shore to greet the day
You have hastened through the dark night to bring what would come anyway
As we share a wife and daughter
Every harbour shares the water
To think of kin across the lake
Is not a voyage you had to make
With your errand you have brought strength to our families in their harbours

Backbone ripples of busy beaver arrowing my homeward trackway
I'm now at peace, my errand done. People and place in harmony
An owl calls out. It calls my name
Unexpected, and now again
She follows me among the trees
I know it's her. She's now at ease
Flying freely. Calling clearly. To our family in our harbours

• POSTSCRIPT

My apartment in the city grows so dark now she's not here
I must escape when she's buried from this lifeless box of despair
I have no lake nor moon as guide
No forest voice to call and glide
No owls call in the city's scope
And I am left alone to cope.
Our wandering ghosts will have no home. There's no family and no harbour.

A story

Awareness	Amorous	Ambivalent	Argument
Attraction	Attachment	Annoyance	Anger
Approach	Attentive	Aggravation	Abuse
Anticipation	Adapting	Antipathy	Assault
Acceptance	Agreement	Abandonment	Arsenic

Carousel

The animated carousel makes me watch it going round
With tots and mums who are not sure won over by the waltzer sound
Teens show off their raw bravado. Serious children hold on tight
Adults have seen it all before though they too are thrilled tonight
Wild and friendly are the horses so they hug their surging charger
Polished paint and rounded carving make the riders grip much harder
Mirrors flash with blurry snapshots in this oasis of warm light
As bright bare bulbs draw shooting stars against the darkness of the night

Galloping forwards all the time thinks each rider on their journey
Their mates are careering up and down, remaining all in company
They can not stay upon this ride. Too soon the slowing-down will come
The humming of the drive reduced until their journey will be done.
Others will soon take their places. They'll look back on those to come.
And now I think our parents knew: Doing their best to give us fun.
The organ's breath brings back my youth. This evening has a special sound
From my chair it's good to watch the generations coming round.

Escape from the office

In the week I work in an office
Shuffling paper and fiddling with pens
It's really incredibly boring
I can't wait 'til it gets to weekends

I go away to reenactments
You know - like the old Sealed Knot
It's great fun to have a good fight
And fills a need that I've got

I thought about Celts and the Romans
And tried some Saxon and Viking
The Civil war was just a big bore
Then I found something more to my liking

I've joined the Old Testament Horde
We enact scenes from out of the Bible
We've Nebuchadnezzar and pharos
Engaging in battles most tribal

But slingshots and shields in a sandpit
Are not what we like to do most
Our favourite battle 's in heaven
As the bad angels get turfed out of the host

I'm on the side of the devils
We have weapons and many rough moves
The get-up is really quite frightening
Though I do wish we didn't wear hooves

I wouldn't like being an angel
So pure, humble and meek
All that they do if you hit them
Is offer you their other cheek

I have been laid out by a harp.
Oh so 'accidentally' of course!
And the thing that made me most mad
Was the angel's girly remorse



After the battle is over
In civvies we go for some grub
Angels and devils together
Drinking away in a pub

Some lovely people you meet there
I've got my eye on a cherub
She's not that pure I can tell you
Tonight I'll be her Beelzebub

So it's back to the office on Monday
After a weekend of mad sex in a tent...
*...Sad to say it was all just a daydream
One of the many I have to invent.*

Shall I compare thee to a lump of clay

Shall I compare thee to a lump of clay
Thou art more stupid and more ignorant
Tough skin do shape your hollow cheeks of grey
And mummer's grease no youth shall grant
Sometimes too hard the marly earth is found
And often is its pores clogged up with soil
And every ball slumps to a shapeless mound
By fire or raw upon the wheel to spoil
But thy lumpen corporation always full of rot
More useless than a simple clod of earth
From mum's best china to a chamber pot
Will eternally outlast you and your lack of worth
So I long for you to die and turn to clay,
So sooner you'll be useful in another way.

More...

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Merlin lives in Witham, Essex and writes when he's not programming computers. He is what they call a character, but whether it's a ! or ? remains a mystery. Most of his leading characters are strong and positive, although of course the interesting bits are their weaknesses and doubts. A glance at the catalogue shows a wide range of settings. Typically he writes interesting characters in interesting situations so that 'stuff happens' but there will be ideas and issues that hover in full view yet in the background until spotlighted when for many readers that's the moment they realise they've been reading a proper book not just a story.