

19.8c

Rose

Dylan Harris



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Potato Press

Some of these poems have been published in *Never Bury Poetry*.

by Dylan Harris

4 anticipating the metaverse, 3 nation six dog, 2 discard

chapbooks

20.0: *r* dye-de-ho, *q* antwerp, *p* tension nitro ego, *o* church is dangerous
vital, *n* tin rush, *m* the A rush, *l* an engineering rush (ii), *k* Miss
Demeanour, *j* flock state, *i* be infinity, *h* Namings, *g* nation six dog, *f*
uncivil law, *e* dead write, *d* chase chase, *c* an engineering rush (i), *b* a
much for we, *a* The Joy Of Tax

19.9: *c* Inn, *b* Swoop, *a* An Ode To The A14

19.8: *c* Rose, *b* Hymnen, *a* Darmstadt

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(Specify “19.8c” in the subject line of any email)
Recitals of some of these poems may be found online

Poems

Box Number

“Smoke Filled Rooms”

Five Days

Inmos

Plumstead Station By Electric Light

Is It Coffee In The Blood?

But It's For The Children...

M6

Angst Cycle

Rose

In Another Conversation

Moon Shadowed Walk

Debugging

Laughter Rose Above My Tired Desire

Cavity Wall Insulation

Box Number

My last few weeks have quietly been
taken by a rising tension,
shielding me from relaxation,
stealing sleep from weekend days.

A lover lost, which seems to feed
my insecure apprehension.
A new job, where, to settle in some
is beyond my working haze.

I'm 28, a bloke whose seen
less of loving's dreamt attention
than belongs to male pretension.
I need to catch a woman's gaze.

“Smoke Filled Rooms”

Fall-out chains across the agenda,
issues mist the verbal blur,
weapons wait tense on lips,
lungs filled with poisoned air.

Stab!
Oh, so good the first time,
such nerves, such achievement,
but now, again, again,
for what?

Five Days

But it's a pity I couldn't say goodbye
the way I'd like to,
to give you another fondness
to recall me by.

I remember the day that I caught your eye:
I don't really know what it was you saw,
but to have been in that smile.

And it's good the weeks apart
weren't simply thrown away:
that we had time to say hello
as lovers like to do.

But it couldn't really work;
you saw that then,
and now I see it too.
But there'll always be affection,
and the smile in your eye.

Inmos

I am to write an ABAQ book,
passing on to programmers
Atari wrapped Transputer gifts,
and HELIOS Assemblers.

The book of opcodes given me
lists some numbers with no meanings.
A evening birdsong has more logic,
a juggernaut could better code,
even Spock, with forever
in a hell Gödel free,
could not program happily.

I've left my cat in San Francisco
with John and his sister Miss Doe
so when I went to clean the chair
I had to stop 'cos Sid weren't there.

And your confusion at that verse
(if your mind's in reason's hearse)
resembles mine when I see blurb
about your chip: a useful word
for each opcode would be nice:
you can't roast nuts without some rice.

Can you help? Do you care?
Why do you just sit and stare?

Yours in anticipation
of some notes of explanation...

*Inmos kindly sent me the opcode book I wanted.
I never wrote the ABAQ book.*

Plumstead Station By Electric Light

Plumstead Station by electric light
shows the joy of Thatcher's night.
Snow encroaches the lonely ex-worker
whose hell is dismissed as "that of a shirker;
if one quarter are too poor to hope
who cares: we'll get three quarters' vote."

Is It Coffee In The Blood

I don't understand what the hell's going on,
the pressure boils over and makes verbal song.
Something has struck at the side of my mind.
Now I know why a poet is found

distracting this pressure with basic desire
rebuilding the dam using sexual power.
Tonight I could break, tonight I could die,
tonight is the night I ask myself why.

What is this need that impels me to write
what is this need I find I must fight?
Why must I wander, why verbally roam,
why must I wander, wander alone?

But It's For The Children...

Imagine your new, squalling baby,
the hopes, the heart, the love, the clasping hands,
the rare unspoken night, the early smile, the throwing up,
taking her round the house to welcome her to her home.

Imagine waking one morning to discover your child
a hollow, plastic shell,
a light, cold, unmoving, hard and nasty toy,
with cracked, faded red cheeks, and a price tag on her foot.

Welcome to Christmas.

M6

Imagine lying down on a beach,
watching large, smooth waves come to shore,
and childish wind playing with the surf;
now stop the action, hold the valleys still,
turn the waves into flowing hills,
change the day into early evening,
and sink the sun to those foothills on the left
so the red shines through the water
so the spray is an evening mist
so you see the mountain picture
dusk teased me with just now.

Angst Cycle

The Door

A door was never really opened
just enough to trap my heart.

Watching wind blow rain around,
white foam build shapes of Henry Moore,
green trees hide sky from eyes below,
humid sleep and light too bright.

Grey wind blow rain around.

Father

A lively young man in old photographs
admiring the gifted coffee-pot lamp,
pretending to smoke, a pretend celebration;
you inhabit so much family memory.

You stood my six-year-old self
snub to the wall
when I held my privacy, instinctively,
silent of my school day.

Just as I would now,
you ran my locomotives
as I, unable to brash my toys,
sulked beneath the table.

I remember peeking through the crack
of a half-closed door,
looking down the hall,
when mother came back, crying.

Father,
you send advice through third hand tales,
you star in fondly corrupted anecdotes.

I still hear their shock
watered down the years.

Father,
why did you die?

Why Is England So Full Of Fools

A year of dreaming:
burst.

A year of hope.

A bubble of sweet wishes
like the last bubble blown:
it seemed to last forever.

As the other glitter
reflecting dead dreams
died around
dissolving,
one survived.

But all the looking,
all the wishing,
all the hope,
a drop of hurt,
splattered on the floor.

Hell welcomes me again
another trip round the tourist sights:
the wishes of "What If",
the fire of "What Should Have Been".

Formulas belong in the dying dreams of science,
in newly filmed repeats in the television desert.

I said nothing,
like another rusty machine,
another rational logic gate,
another dry processor
in the statistic age.

Yet your look was “Yes”
and my dreams were you.
I waited for you to say what I saw,
you waited for me to come anyway,
and the bubble died.

Why is England so full of fools?

(untitled)

Showers. Red eyes,
“mummy, why did daddy die?”.
Years later, I still ask.

Letter

A long time ago
when the trees were learning to be green again
you wrote from a languid, slow summer
saying you would be in England's grey cold
so soon from now. Unless Australia's
next season of sun, its summer Christmas,
holds you more than legal bindings,
or that old address is not the place to write,
or the unions repair their broken threat,
Hi!

Rose

You ought to know
there is some snow
settled on your nose.

But what is odd,
you silly sod,
from it there grows a rose.

In Another Conversation

A gallic duchess, with white light streaming
like happy tears through gingerbread hair.

A grinning nose, and cosmetic skin
smooth as the dead of night.

Smiles given more often than trains can take
each and every one of us home to love.

Moon—Shadowed Walk

The glow of the summer's day
declines into warmth.

The wind brushes each caress
of our conversation.

You have sweetened my
secret doubts away.

Debugging

Masonry.
Dust rising from System mountains,
Collapsed.

My logic is dead:
I thought the world was stable.

I hunt the crash,
with algorithmic oil to smooth the modules
to keep my world intact.

I hunt in functions
running down statements, through calls,
chasing echoes of errors
always in the next procedure.

Sometimes I trip a pointer,
and the system rebuilds itself.
Sometimes I put each assignment back,
one by one
to find some element gone;
but no tool reports a fault:
the program stays down.

It should feel so good,
when I win the world again;
victory
should satisfy.
But it never does.

These quakes should never happen.

Laughter Rose Above My Tired Desire

As I heard the two-tone voice of Jo
my libido's invention,
sitting naked in the empty seat beside me,
vanished,

as laughter rose above my tired desire.

Cavity Wall Insulation

Foam,
bricked in,
night shaded.
Fumes

drifting
through cracks,
a silent
strychnine
gas,
tightening
the lungs,

blocking
air
like a child lock
blocks
escape
from
the back seat,

waiting
for sleep's
appearance
before launching
the final
breathless
attack.

