

david adams

Selected Poems 1

1967 - 1995

Index of first lines

Behold the night;.....	3
cold, blue gently lapped.....	4
When sixty loomed rampant o'er piquet.....	5
eternity's a transient bulge in consciousness.....	6
The moment is soft,.....	7
He that hath on the lone hill stood.....	8
Summer's sweetened when the pink hibiscus blooms.....	9
Hot brass lips bolted to the wind.....	10
I sat inside a dead man	11
I swim your intimate softness in the night.....	12
In closing now this book of dreams.....	13
Foaming at the mouth.....	14
Jade is my secret garden in the new clutch of spring.....	15
Shadowy sentinels peer, mute, the weighted hanging veil.....	16
He gives me the moon.....	17
Just another Mr Wrong.....	18
Nothing ever happens but this string of infinite instances.....	19
Oh life.....	20
O that my eyes would fade, go blind.....	21
As embalming warm cascades.....	22
From near despair celestial chemistry's conspired.....	23
Sweet love's encumbrances seem to fright you.....	24
in sudden moment, then.....	25
I was once Lord Randall's butler.....	26
There,.....	27
Protect me from the poor sadness.....	28
These fragile strands; the web and column colony within.....	29
Long after you have been absorbed by parting.....	30
When this quiet and gentle man relinquished his long tenancy,.....	31
When to my gaze her brimming smile revealed.....	32

Behold the night;
Keeper of my fleeting secret.
Patient listener for my tales of sadness
Friend, adviser, dreamer
Stay awhile and cast me free.
Deep,
Deep
Bathing the wounds of the day in your dark oil.
Cool the sorrow;
Hustle your silences together and let them bind me
Anchor me in these pits of no laughter.
Stay,
Stay;
Stay with me night.

cold, blue gently lapped
translucent leviathans
stilled in an arctic calm;

the pure iced white
whip-launched its image-spear to freeze motionless
distant-seeking thoughts
foxed this master of the inexorable, Time;

step backwards to a place when he had not begun
peeling layer on layer from fate's encrusted impenetrability
into the unthinkable *then*
where every possibility at once is squashed
dimensionless before beginning
into the same jack-in-the-box spot

and every other point in all infinity forever touches,
now

When sixty loomed rampant o'er piquet
and the motley crew marshalled for his day
 once chris cracked a pun
 the fun had begun
and laughter exploded from deejay

sir davo mused somewhat philosophically
that 'day' was surely 'date', etymologically
 ron scoffed quite lightly
 as eep told him, politely,
 (naturally)
to button it, pedantalogically

the brotherly banter did lumber
loftily when there should have been slumber
 the significance was debated
 and agreed over-rated
after all, it's only a number

for pka (14/ 9/1956 -)

eternity's a transient bulge in consciousness

comes in for a while
and with a conjurers sly smile waves a *forever* flag between gaping little eyes

wafting the illusion of
one
 stopping time dead in his merciless tracks
and
two
 getting a constant dose of Ying;

but then the little sucker turns out to be just another fraud
an illusory shadow with only a pin-prick of reality
stuffed down his pants

He's gone in the usual puff of smoke

A kick in the teeth from out of nowhere
and
 “ I'm back ”, sang Yang

The moment is soft,
Understated,
Not to be undulated.

I have been quietly delighting
In having seen you again,
And now you are about to leave.
I do not look directly at you
But become aware that you are near.
You seem to hesitate, briefly, then,
Having made up your mind, are in front of me.
Your arm is around me and we share
The tentative embrace of two new friends.
As we part my cheek is so fleetingly brushed
By your lips that, had not its skin burned
So vibrantly alive to this moment,
Had not its bearer,
It may well have remained subliminal.

In this unexpected instant, far, far away
From my left-behind thoughts,
Reached your gentle, enduring touch.

This is the profoundest, most gentle kiss of all;
The tenderest farewell.

He that hath on the lone hill stood
Shall bend with this remembering breeze
And dancing within his acres would
Bid the bright day by

He that hath gasped on this alone morning
In the dark sky on earth's claw fell
And there was no shout nor other warning
Betrayed the hour's knell

He that on melting corner, flung
A punched shadow in the naked light
Sucked with swelled lips and parched tongue
The dew on the dead drums

He that was dipped in the year's first flood
Sprang from charging panic with
A trench of tears, a gourd of blood
Scooped from the hollow sun.

He that hath laughed not hung his head
He that hath spun with April's son
Collecting his scattered breath had vanished
In the deep wind

He, with melted lashes and brittle hair
With silent heart cupped in forest stones
Cold bones leaped and danced with despair
On the sweet ground

He that hath not slashed goodbyes or grieved
Was met by chariots on the causeway
Flowers that greeted his flight deceived
In the long, last day.

Hibiscus

Summer's sweetened when the pink hibiscus blooms
Soft spreading petals crimped in evolution's hand
Stand proud, aroused, eager that this brilliant
Day's fond caress may whisper 'cross each
Sculpted crease and velvet furrow's fold.

Becoming Spring when I can drink her fragrant drifts.
Touch and taste; on lips and fingers liquid clings
And in its trail the lightly slipping strokes
Coax to stream the hidden secret spring.

Winter's warmed when red hibiscus shed their hue
Thrust gripping perfume through cold, still air.
Wrapped in these outreaching swollen blossoms,
Streaked crimson,
Stains with its tender fire her lover's kiss.

When Autumn's come, and night, her time is lost,
And one by one the pools of magic fade to be
Enveloped by the dark; this rapture's spell subsides.
Its potent memory kindles and rekindles how she shone
As lips now shut to wait, to hope, to dream.

Hot brass lips bolted to the wind
Heard strange soundings

Carcass dons the cloak, re-steels his gun
His sweaty, bitten eyes aglow
Death tears her hair
Her finger-claws attack the strings
Her monstrous head drank fire

The panic-stricken mute unfolded
Plucked from lutes head
Gaspings fears

Father said the world was not quite round
And mother died

The spitting idol, the crust-crutched spark
Vanished;
All fears
suddenly appeared.

Rain screamed and buried
Scars across the face;
Faces that had lingered, ditched.

And all without a sound....

Cold limestone arms and lips
Heard nothing.

I sat inside a dead man ...

Frozen to his heaving breath
clinged to its sucking and blowing,
its heaving and sighing ...
 heaving and sighing
while the scattered remains of his once proud longings
solidify to plug the hole where his tears might escape

... powerless to stop his dying

I swim your intimate softness in the night
Hold without touching, kiss without tasting
Feel your long limbs stretch pressed to mine.
Trembling with such delicious fire I must believe
That you are now beside, astride, beneath me;
That each adored line of your perfect profile beckons
My desire to know with these ecstatic fingertips,
With blazing lips, surrendered trusting tongue;
That where our flamed skins touch, their molecules dissolve
And are absorbed in glittering starfire
Thrust into a blinding timeless void where there are only two -
And on each other solely focused - alive.

Suddenly alone again;
Your having gone cuts deeper than your just not here,
As sublimated tears spill on phantom flames
To summons stifled desperate longing reappear.

This yearning for your body would not grow quite so rich
Had not our intimate minds loved so tender, deep;
Had, perhaps, this intercourse of spirits
Not been required to blaze while others sleep.

Closing

In closing now this book of dreams
no more to breathless dwell therein
remain with new and painful nakedness
these monumental phantoms, memorised
in times of magic far outside this paling world.
Once knee-deep nurtured in the binding pool
of memories that minds connected in outreaching thought
keep vibrantly alive, now stand alone...

{great sphinx and pyramid bear mute witness
to the day the swirling web of life
from which they're thrust
relinquished its enriching grip}

...to reinforce
the locked throat cocktail shook from lonely shackled tears
and cries of mourning for the bitter passing
of his use-by hours.

With berating, accusation, doleful to distraction,
enraged and spiteful has the former tender plateau cringed attack;
no more the flow of balmy warmth to smooth her angular terrain.
The molten pool of passion crusts brittle at the heartbreak edge,
and slowly will the white fire darken, stiffening its
viscous conduit through and through
till, entropy exhausted, hope that some sustaining magma
will miraculously upwell to re-infuse the dying glow
is cast aside.

With only desperate futile wishing to defeat,
the coagulating mass obliterates reprieve.

To wait and more, to wait and wait
for healing rain to drench again these lunar forms
to cleanse, breaking with mighty gentleness
this geyser of rigidity that now dictates all thought,
and touch to softening these skeletal frames of pain
for distant undreamt future times to have the faintest hope
that life may find some meagre cavity in which to hide
her tiny seed, and so, fertility start to reclaim.

In Memoriam Colin Fallon

Foaming at the mouth
The doors of his heart crushed shut
Against his flinching face
Flung tears on the black-crossed wind
And blundered
The loneliness of the rolling sands

REMEMBERED...

His past;
The bleakness of the future he looked out for
His feet
the last freedom he possessed

At dusk there hung a sigh
Upon his lips
And dreams reclaimed his head
From memories' embraces.
He, parched throat, on the road did sing
And at his parting, silent, fare no well.

Round and round the epitaph
Spun
Through words that echoed
Much too young
That sounded of the life begun
But only hinted at his death.

(Colin Fallon 19/2/1949 - 24/2/1967)

Jade is my Secret Garden

Jade is my secret garden in the new clutch of spring
unspoiled by years' long drought, unscarred as these time dried, near-
dying limbs wait, aching their moist kiss,
yearning to burst dancing, green.

In a winter's dream her growing seeds are stroked with words of fire.

Awake now, explodes this verdant trembling
deep pools sing as the new rains cascade;
once the trapped tears of a lifetime, now flow to
repair love's soft path to her healing secret glade,
embrace this stampede of new growth into lushness.

Yesterday's entombing power has been conquered as
oceans of jade wash clear the lovers, flying their secret garden
under this sweet night's most brilliant song.

Mist

Shadowy sentinels peer, mute, the weighted hanging veil
Feet immobile, slender fingers trace the sky
With obstinacy and grace
Fade to disappearing in the silent distance
The edge of vision's blurred,
There's no beyond to postulate a continuity
That may be thought to still exist;
But was just seconds gone unquestionably real

Past the invisible horizon
Mythical externals dim and fade
Along the path each footstep's clang
Is swallowed in the moistened air

These billion floating spheres become a mirrored womb
Gathering the thousand piercing arrows, that somehow
Combined make up a man,
Into a safe and healing bosom
And for just one fleeting sweet, sweet time
Bears them aloft.

Moon Giver

He gives me the moon
When I wanted the bathing glow of a little star;
Its eerie light blisters my eager, waiting hands.

If I could hold his gift
I might find all the room in my heart
Where its milk-silver could shine just for me,
Watch, wait, invisible by day
Hum with mute dazzling through my long night
Impale my whole being to its freezing warmth
But oh, my recoiling shocked hands have bled too long;
Nerves stripped raw.

In a moment of mind's pain from its cold fires
Bursts my harsh scream;
Fragments of light from the shattering globe
Spear frantic through terrified darkness
Crushed sparks shoot the once pale air
As radiance explodes.

In the shade of a distant white dwarf phantom moon I recall
For a moment I played with a magic
Moon that was given
By his dying...

Just another Mr Wrong
Slung down the wagging end of queue
Where trophies, gathering the years' dust,
Are the unwitting subjects of amusing anecdotes
that impress and titillate the present hero.

They've probably fawned and grovelled, too.

Nothing Ever Happens

Nothing ever happens but this string of infinite instances
Of time, and life's the glue that marries them
Abutting, leaves no place to hide
Gripped in such exquisitely mutating chains
Invisible, obviously propelled.

Beyond, and on reflection
As the moments pile incessantly one on the next
May glancing back, seem the illusion
Of a fabric without stitch or seam
That is the memory of those feelings
In whose grip eternity would not be long enough to know.

Oh life
How are you?

This ...
the windswept beach of a day
lies unbroken and joyous

There seems no sadness that can haul me down

I bubble and froth like shaken champagne
and laugh in every cell of my aching body
Quivering with this kiss of happiness
I seem to remember the world as it never was and never shall be

Laugh along with me
...before the dusk.

O that my eyes would fade

O that my eyes would fade, go blind
That they should not stir the secret heart.
With spears of dull regret is brought to mind
A memory of the cross-roads of the ways that part.
And so weave sobbing patterns deep
Into that night; that black eternal keep
Where all the shadows call and moan.
And standing in this sea a tower, so piteously alone.

Let now the mystery piper call
A wailing tune of dreams; a luckless
Bench of choirs just waiting as so many.
On this snarling sunset breath the crouching blinds
Watched well concealed beneath the spray
Where once the mist descended; now, the dark of day.

Showering

As embalming warm cascades
flush free the silt
of dreams lost deep inside this armoured cage of dormant thought
their chattering begins.

Protagonists of clashing causes
each flag-handed, waving
engage at will or whim
unto their helpless host unmerciful, oblivious
circling menacingly, fanged arguments unsheathed
with gnash and growl, responding
cutting thrust subliminal agenda obstinate
convinced the numbing repetition will anaesthetize the ravage of these
rigid held-back tears

...and sometimes they'll be chattering away all day.

Sonnet

From near despair celestial chemistry's conspired
With you to take apart this wasting vessel and rebuild
By words born of your gentle heart, love's touch so skilled
Makes tender thoughts that once with venom fired

Crafted by expert hands, no remnant of what's old's
Allowed remain; all prior points of reference void
Suspended, lost; only on implementing love's new promise buoyed
Until upon the alchemist, mysterious alchemy takes hold.

And now, with me, performs its miracle on you
Sets you ablaze with light, soaked in desire
For reaching out, grasping the seldom proffered chance
To fuse these scattered movements into but one dance.

And so united, quenched by love's refining fire
Each lost in each, transformed, emerge anew.

(for Judy)

Sonnet

Sweet love's encumbrances seem to fright you
Some, in manner that I ere do know
That in this sacred shrine of adoration
Your tender heart may find no room to grow.
And now, its pledge bestowed, the whispered beauty
Of your body, feels sometimes a yearning free,
But hesitates; because are born within
Considerations of not one but three.
So, having all to give, and having given all does fear awaken,
That in giving it is always something lost that's taken.

To you I give myself, and would employ
Such bonds that can not bind, but let sweet love's
Encumbrances free your spirit, to enjoy
The richest fruits of love without their cloy.

(for Rosemary)

Sunset

in sudden moment, then
the drifting eye's shocked still
with piercing liquid burns
bent huge by hanging low upon the distance.
transfixed; sucks hungrily the blazing orb
and sky splashed from its pool of fire
to sear the moment in a thought.

electric tingle waves down the spine
trailing its basking warm
the dazzling wound
as from this magic turned
is touched by blindness where the molten light display had
by burning

how quick the fleeting fury is dispelled
left angry, brooding coals condemned to fade
now gone and going...
in their desperate moment
strive to remember whence they came, before they die.

The Lament of Lord Randall's Butler

I was once Lord Randall's butler
I sang him such songs of the sky
And fed him the wine that rightly was mine
But I bear him no grudge now he's dead
I bent to my knees, 'twas my duty to please
And no doubt the money was good
But before I was through, I'd had my due
Of "Do this; and then chop some wood".

I was once Lord Randall's butler
Why I hung him no-one will know,
But the funniest sight as I turned out the light,
Was him dangling from tassels of bell-rope.
Oh many's the time in the early morn,
He'd haul on that rope till I came,
And then he'd ask me to read him a bedtime story.
But at last I have got him where for years I've wanted
To see him dangling free -
And I love him dead.

I was once Lord Randall's butler.
With the A-bomb they dusted my toes.
Here I lie, powdered bones, my mind hot as hell,
Now I'm dead but my glory goes on.

I was once Lord Randall's butler.
Now I'm pushing up flowers from the grave.
There's tulips from Holland and orchids from Spain
For the war waged agin me has gone.
What's left of the world is my grave and my song
And the soldiers that did it play on, for
Though they're paid to kill, I did of free will,
What's the difference is all that I ask.

I was once Lord Randall's butler.
The Hero that died with all England,
And laughing sit I
At the shape of the sky
And the colour of blood in the sea.

There,
a tiny bud awakening
faint stirrings gently pushing and pulling,
disturbing the soft, dark earth.
In a wealth of nourishment, the seed takes root,
the tiny wisps prising their way through the clods,
here and there groping at an obstacle;
fighting, ever fighting to survive.

Half the battle done,
the stalk, ruffling the surface calm, spits forth
swells to embrace the world, it dances, jerkily
leaps towards the sun.

Half the battle won.

The crisp new shoot, proudly bearing its great gift
a noble chair fit for the frailty of the serene queen under
her cloak of preparation.

Lurches unsteadily
then magnificently climbs to full height,
and in that instant the lady of the flower steps forth.
With boldness flings the covers off
and standing, shines so violently in her pale splendour,
the sun and sky a murky grey beside her as she smiles;
Her moment of glory.

One laugh, one kiss and disappears.

Therese and Isabelle

Protect me from the poor sadness
The swallowing horror of melancholy
That gaped as she remembered
Her honey-suckling past.

Therese; the eternal wind-wisp
Alone on the beach of no footprints
With the invisible phantom of her life.
The deep weals in mind sang as she wandered
Remembering the wind and air that was once her
Isabelle; and her deep tears mingled with silence.

This chair, this room,
This reflection,
All beyond the inched limits of
Forever.

The tide swept over intricate sand moulds
And the cold gale flicked autumn leaves away
Away
Away
Never to be seen.

The crying mist and closed door
Leave only nothingness.

These fragile strands; the web and column colony within
Our own great edifice is forged in time
We little know, can rarely guess the purpose of each
Tangling torsion beam
Nor chart their exponentially influencing spheres.

This brittle coral reef, wells from a living sea
In swaying equilibrium, drifts on the shadow of
Annihilation down troughs of the abyss.
By plunging precipice, takes evolution's most tenacious course
To occupy a space that's made unique
Squirts from these nozzles in the endless night, to glow.
Adapts, is moulded by providing current swirls
In constant lunar push and pull grasps what's been given,
To erect a shaft of shifting brilliance
Shimmeringly; forever on the moment poised.

The ghosted remnants of each haunting moment spent
Provides a gritting for succeeding days
Piled high, precariously oozing from the last,
Cemented by the passing seconds' cries.
Nor all haphazard random forward push shall e'er escape
The lurking violent seed of what has past.

Long after you have been absorbed by parting
Will your hands still lie upon me.
Where they've moved sensations flared
A rippling river's myriad fires
Shoot longing conduits from ablaze to glow.

Smooth out the troubled furrows of incessant thoughts
Re-caulk the borders of these fragments that they might adjoin
once more
Allow, but briefly, a yearning entity exist.

The brooding sea of stroking fills my eyes
Tears grip my throat; defeat this logic speechless
O'erflow to drench surviving finite thought.
Overflow

And all the while the parts of you now buried deep within me
Rage and burn

Whenever you touch me now, you touch me everywhere.

When this quiet and gentle man relinquished his long tenancy,
allowed to quit at last a final retrospective solitary term
tear off the threadbare cloak blind quartermaster Fate selected
snatched, in an instant, from the nearest rack with no regard for fit
abandon further contemplation of his worn and precious icons
their links to salving memories excised
as twilight darkens on the seventh of his seven dozen years
dwelt in fading hours bidding Adelaide farewell;
A fountain of exquisite sadness flushed pervasive
To the farthest outposts of remembered past
Refreshing and revaluing the weaving vines of subtle influence that,
Through his enduring presence down the years,
Have grown invisibly entwined with every other hungry shoot and stalk
Fervently bidding to forebear the fruit
And blossomed into anchoring platforms of repose
That nourish unobtrusively this consciousness that now subsumes his own.

And in my turn I hope to age as he
Not docile and compliant, meekly draping time-bent shoulders
With whatever arbitrary garments tossed
But in *his* kind of quiet and gentle rage
Deride with mocking mirth all life's absurd constraints
And lash ironic at the myopic, blazing insignificance
That is the universe of man;
Whilst always seeking glimpses of the rational blinding light
which no man dare claim to understand,
nor hope through discourse to expose -
where each description obfuscates, each nodding head
plunge deeper in confusion - but,
Which in acts of pure creation illuminates the secret inner realm...
One potent drop escapes and sunset roses blush the empty sky.

(in memoriam Malcolm Ross 11/6/1911 - 4/5/1995)

When to my gaze her brimming smile revealed
The touch of Fate's providing hand
So like my own explosive secret kept.
And that, should I by leap of trust, invited,
Strip away these heavy cloaking garments to expose
An opening fragile flower, she'd understand.

Unburdened loves completes the sharing circle
Begun as colleagues; now becomes as friends
Another's thoughts extensions of one's own.
No caging moral postures intercede, nor judgement's sneer to
Paralyze the blossoming of care now openly enjoyed.

And gently guiding 'cross the swaying bridge
Emotions crests and troughs provides,
Able to enjoy a soaring not yet hers;
Collecting fragments from what disappointment leaves
To coax them back to fractured unity
With such attentions that a lover might bestow.

What mystery provides such rare collected
Graces, dovetailed so true to future's need
Placing in a living phial timed to dispense
The perfect balm at just the perfect speed?

Notes

Protect me from the poor sadness	
O that my eyes would fade, go blind	
Behold the night	
There, a tiny bud awakening	
He that hath on the lone hill stood	1967
In Memoriam - Colin Fallon	1967
The Lament of Lord Randall's Butler	
Oh life, how are you	
Hot brass lips bolted to the wind	
Sonnet for Rosemary	22 10 1980
Jade is my Secret Garden	29 9 1993
Sonnet for Judy	10 10 1993
I Swim Your Intimate Softness	31 12 1993
When To My Gaze	1 1 1994
Hibiscus	3 2 1994
Moon Giver	3 1994
These Fragile Strands	3 1994
Mist	6 1994
Nothing Ever Happens	1994
Sunset	begun 1991, completed 1994
Closing	1 1995
When this quiet and gentle man ...	6 1995
Iced in	7 1995