



Poetry Page

with drawings by Fantasy Pedlar



The Price of Innocence (as peace slips by)

They never asked for this,
surprised too late,
missed its coming,
their dreams destroyed.

Now lost and buried,
captured
by the rubble,
once their homes.

Conflict's collateral,
they say,
no dignity,
no burial rites,
no names,
lost in a war,
not theirs.

Mourned simply,
by tearful family, friends,
fearful of similar fate,
on cratered roads
and towns,
with rescue ships too far.

They had no choice,
for megalomaniacs
manipulate, destroy,
as a world looks on,
in apathy and empathy,
with prejudice and hates.

Their agony spread
across ours screens,
as pale leaders pause,
postulate, prance.

Twisted words,
reveal their sides,
like shouts form louts
in school-yard brawls,
let run until they end.

History repeated,
same war,
a different time.
Innocence,
the price and cost.
No winners,
just bombed-out dreams,

While we,
in affluence, removed,
dream on
about another world,
yet the same,
letting peace slip by.

Lyn Lockrey (28/7/06)



Account of Mortgagee

A sign upon a grey gum tree, displayed outside the gate –
"For Sale Account of Mortgagee," spells out somebody's fate.
I sigh for paddocks parched and bare – the plight of starving stock –
the bank will strive to grasp their share of every barren rock.
Those grief-gnawed areas staring where their owners cannot cope –
bewildered and past caring, they've relinquished any hope.

How many dreams are left behind, replaced by stark despair?
Their hearts in hopelessness entwined, deprived of any care?
Ambitions of a lifetime swamped because a vicious drought,
unbridled and uncaring, romped to force the farmers out.
The west wind sighs abandonment and curlews wail at night;
they flaunt a harsh environment sustained by Nature's might.

I sigh for careworn stockmen, gazing long at cloudless sky;
hear squawking crows that mock them – gorging on the beasts that die.
The hawks in circles soaring through their dynasty of blue,
survey extensive flooring with a foul repast in view.
The foxes and goannas cringe to claim their reeking share –
A rotten carcass yields their binge among the vermin there.

Perhaps next week good rain will come – but that will be too late;
the banks will beat the victor's drum and kiss the hand of fate.
What's happened to the bankrupt men who left the land behind?
Could greater turmoil disrupt them, or fortune be less kind?

In travels through the countryside I pray I never see
Another sign of suicide, "For Sale by Mortgagee."

Ellis J. Campbell,
Dubbo, NSW

Winner 2006 Nimbin A&I Society Poetry Competition

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WINNERS WILL BE NOTIFIED BY MAIL.

Wardrobe Malfunction

Nightcap's cloak is sewn in magic
Embroidered in mists and the white net of cloud
Veiled in soft pillows of darkest grey
She wears her weather proudly
Storms flung around her shoulders like a shawl

I live in the hemline of Nightcap's foothills
Not in the lushness of her dense green gown
Nor in the gathered granite of her rocky cliffs
Nor the midnight blue of her deep pockets
Nor in the drape of blue-green rainforest
Tapering elegantly to white gums and crystal creeks

No I live in the bleached green border
Appliqués of bush pinned in place
Between worn bald hills and white beads of new fence lines
Camphor coloured and brick hued
Ugly patches of suburbs with cul-de-sac stains
Scorched with the zippers of new tar roads

Little rips and tears in Nightcap's fabric
Her stitches are unravelling
A testament not a vestment
To the material of greed

Janelle McLellan, Gungas Road, Nimbin

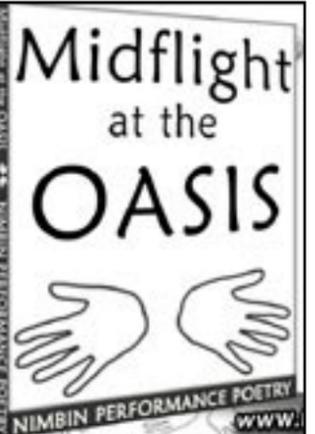


A Backward Glance

I cast a glance behind me
and see a life well spent,
Content.
Few regrets,
Lasting affections,
Thwarted love,
Decisions made
that cannot be unmade.
Losses, gains,
wondrous joy and exquisite pain – anguish.
Family life – children's love
Nature's bounty – daughters, sons.
Open arms, spindly legs, run ... take my hand,
to guide me through their fairyland.
They are my second chance,
my azure sky.
Here ... now, in my backward glance
through misting eye.

I glance ahead, I see me,
wiser now - maybe.
The road is clear.
Birdsong speaks of love renewed,
Whispered ... into muffled ear.
Tall trees shade the way.
Fewer turns – the goals in sight,
Seize the day.
Tomorrow shimmers in my eager eye,
A future lit with a magic glow
- of contentment.
Peace, hope.
The fight is won.
I glance ahead.
Reach out and boldly tread.
Another step – another time.
My life is just begun.

Alan Lloyd, Nimbin, 24/1½006



Memory

Memory plays tricks.
Each year's half a
million minutes
will leave few traces.

The past is fragile.
Recollections uncertain,
memories will fade.

Some moments stand out
crystal clear on
reflection,
treasures for all time.

Cruel Alzheimer's
Would freeze all those
memories
and seal them away.

Are you still yourself
once all memories have
gone?
Who is left inside?

Kay Martin

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