

Poems by Stephen Morrison-Burke

Birmingham 2012

Where World War 2 caused a blitz many are fortunate not to remember.
Where matadors walk around a bull that now defends the city centre.
Where Claret and Blues shake hands after 90 minute tempers.
Where Botanical Gardens exhibit splendour,
Where Lickey Hills provides adventures,
Did I mention,
A New Street Station that meets and greets upon entrance.
A leading University with internationally renowned lectures.
A unique 'Brummie' accent that happily draws attention.
The second largest city with millions in attendance.
A place where Royal Ballet is so elegantly performed.
Where Ozzy-was-born to The Streets Duran Duran walked.
Where canals go on for miles for a subtle water tour.
Where seas of cultures, creeds and colours are all for one and one for all.
Where the Hippodrome harbours happy claps and pantomime heckles.
A junction of spaghetti that sits in the Guinness Book of Records.
A brand new library to be opened in 2013.
The city is Birmingham,
Experience the dream.

Star Shaped

Sometimes I get dismayed with the monotony of the day.
When the night falls, my mood changes.
I swiftly move to the window pane.
It's the safest place for my problems to be traded for peaceful wishes
which are aimed at a far way place.
A vast space far away.
I just love to star gaze.
I just love to absorb the silence that the stars make.
The golden rays light up my eyes and my soul and my eyes become whole again.

You see the stars are laughing when they sparkle.
They communicate to each other by dancing, just like bee's do.
And illuminate the idea of a brighter future, just like we do.
When the dark night decided to marry the moon, the Universe threw stars as confetti.
And they settled.
Some say they settled because its a long way down.
I believe they settled as a symbol of hope.
Discreetly hanging around so that every small child could shake a snow globe and secretly know that the shape
of a snow flake is the closest thing to a star this world can ever own.

We mortals talk of reaching for them and rightly so.
The Egyptians built pyramids directly beneath them.
Spinning particles of heated Hydrogen and Helium representative of 'freedom and growth'.
Epicentre of all that we know..... or at least all we believed that we knew.
That's until the stars smiled and whispered that are theories weren't so.
Such freedom once again introduced us to our growth and their truth.

Regardless of the fixation I hold in my heart.
Regardless of my standing next to this window,
Wrists binded together,
Ready to catch one,
Fingers wide apart.
Regardless, I'm still very much aware that my star shaped hands won't be holding any, any time soon.
I've come to accept that.
But the idea that I can't capture stars in my eyes,
And light up the next persons life with these flames,
Prize wide open a parochial mind,
And then repeat the process over again.
Now surely its wise for me to reject that.

So for now I'll get back to staring at stars,
Fighting sleep whilst yawning,
Acknowledging natures masterpiece,
Until the largest star of all comes calling,
To inform me that its morning.

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Dance With Me

Dance with me. As if dancing was our very first passion. As if all around us is not happening, simply dance with me. When our inner demons laugh at us and belittle our final compassionate actions, take my hand, Bolero fashion and dance before the chance has passed us. For the Gods, they have finally marked our cards and our sins, they were never worlds apart, although you may claim different in a bid to resist the Cinderella shoe that fits, which you'll find is a universal size of hypocrites. Our commercial side did well to hide the worst of it. Yet each word and verse we've ever lived will surely meet us in the life there after. So before the judge regurgitates our scripts, let's sentence ourselves to dance and laughter and greet calm before the storm of karma. And I resent those supposedly close to us who weighed us down with their own insecurities, bitter breeds and energy thieves, hopelessly devoted to negativity. And I resent those who proposed we grow up to seek the phantom land of maturity. Such urgency in urging me and you to be responsible was always futile, so now I smile at the inner child I once was and still hope to be. Silly random acts with tantrums attached still gloat when coaxing me. Let's dance together regardless of whether we have rhythm in our bones. Let's laugh at the weather and whether or not we're fettered we won't fester on the fact that we're dancing alone. Let's just dance our way home. And when all is said and done it's our most embarrassing moments that made life so entertaining. Namely my continual falling over in public, your endless tears and curse words when inebriated. To have not caused those raucous scenes in the first place would have hurt worse at this reminiscent stage. I now see that we had to live the beginning of our stories before being allowed to turn pages. And let's face it, our good and bad behaviour they both have their places. For you and I know that the universe embraces the apple that Issac Newton studied no less than the one Adam and Eve tasted. We had to make the mistakes we made to make it here today and I wouldn't change this and I hope you wouldn't either. This just a reminder that our colourful lives don't have the kindness to tell us when times up. So let's throw some crazy shapes on the dance floor like Patrick Swayze and Jennifer Grey the moment when he air lifts her. Because brothers and sisters, the politics, the cynical sinister that administer any form of torture to hinder us can't succeed when the music in our soul is mellifluous. Can't breath when our steps get too intricate. Can't believe love and peace is what's shifting us. Can't see that our giving is what's gifting us. And if we must, we shall waltz from this realm into the next where no doubt the unexpected will once again attempt to try and get the best of us. The difference being, when the vultures come to steal our limitless dreams you'll instinctively know to take my hand, to take a chance, to laugh and dance with me. Just dance with me.

One Man And His Dog

He's a one man band as he stumbles to the local chippy. Walking stick in hand and orders a bag of chips with vinegar, vegetarian restricted. People stare as if he's misfitted to share the world in which they live in. He's tired of their ignorance, but not one to expose their theories. He then slides into the off-license and frightens the young twenty something cashier who's clearly uncomfortable with his mere existence. Ten minutes previous she was bored to tears, now she's raw with fear because this so called despicable individual is crawling near her. Plus she's a self obsessed so and so and so she thinks his cause is clear. He's here to disruptively provoke her. No sir, he's got more important things in his thoughts my dear. He purchases two bottles of brandy and four beers before steering towards his house which is an uphill effort, therefore deep breaths and shuffle steps are his preference. The little Jack Russell by his side, Mary Ellen, is named after his first wife who died. The whole story, he doesn't tell it, but this pet is now his best friend so without question ever near him. A brown leather lead worn out and worn around her neck is her necklace, as she shakes from the cold, but has never feared him. When he reaches number 27, he turns the key and enters his humble abode of a home which still remains very much unassuming. Every room is groomed with the same decor from ceiling to floor as when he moved in. And so he sits down in the same place, same groove in the chair. Flicks the switch he switched off when he left to switch on again his wireless, so the news can be tirelessly heard and he can use curse words of how the worlds all gone wrong again. Those happy days of yesteryear, with reminiscent tears he longs for them. Never really cared for televisions but has many books. Never really cared for putting on the heating so its freezing unless he cooks. Plays dumb like Columbo when assessing character, same witty looks. He's a genius. So like any genius his happiness constantly remains on tender hooks. He opens his first can of beer and takes a sip, then bursts out laughing as two shots of brandy chases it. In a crazed change of pace, he turns off the wireless, slips on his favourite LP and begins dancing around the living room footloose and fancy free like a lunatic. Mary Ellen is quick to resume position as she's use to this. She climbs onto her hind legs, puts both her paws into the palms of his hands and joins in as if its the Summer of '76. Now they're both jovially jiving, eyes alight and souls released. "There's more to life than this mortal life" he cries out into the night quite rightly convinced. After two hours and a skin full later, the elderly man and his sidekick are now fast asleep. And tomorrow he'll rise up again at half past six. And tomorrow he'll live a public life the outside world expect of him. And tomorrow he'll smile to himself about last nights antics. And tomorrow he'll know that behind closed doors he's no more different from the rest of those who've rejected him.