

Poetry Series

**Terry Donovan**  
**- poems -**

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# Terry Donovan(12/6/41 to?)

Amateur poet. Motorcyclist. Retired.

## 59/60

Put one building block on top of another  
Put another one on top of that one  
And another one on at that one  
Then keep adding them.  
Stop and have a spoonful of condensed milk.  
Keep adding blocks  
Taking care, as the taller it gets  
The more wobbly it gets.  
Keep going  
Until it finally collapses  
And the blocks fall down  
Rolling this way and that.  
Have another spoonful of condensed milk.  
Roll a cigarette.  
Smoke it.  
Then lie on the settee  
And go to sleep.

Terry Donovan

# A Bunch Of Wild Flowers

He went to the florist and bought a bunch of roses for Meg.  
They were red and beautiful and cost him an arm and a leg.

I walked along the hedgerow picking wild flowers galore  
Until I had the loveliest bunch anyone ever saw.

I gave them to Meg, she said 'Thank you' and gave me a beautiful grin,  
Adding 'Don't call me - I'll call you' and threw them in the bin.

Terry Donovan

# A Christmas Present

She looked out the window on Christmas day  
And could scarce believe her eyes  
For what she saw beyond all doubt  
Was a wonderful surprise.  
A motor car all nicely wrapped  
With ribbons, baubles and bells.  
She thought 'Of all the gifts I've had  
This certainly excels'.  
She loved her old car sure enough  
But in it had no trust  
So unrebloodliable,  
A four-wheeled pile of rust.  
So she was thrilled and tickled pink,  
'Oh darling! How nice this is! '  
She grabbed him, squeezed him oh so tight  
And smothered him with kisses.  
Then in her hand he pressed the key,  
She thanked him and looked down,  
But then her smiles all disappeared  
And Changed into a frown.  
These keys weren't new, she knew them well -  
She'd had them several years.  
They were the keys to her old car.  
Now she was near to tears.  
'I couldn't get another car',  
He told her 'For I know  
How much you love your Escort  
And could never let it go, '  
'You are a rotten sod, you know,  
You really had me going.  
You must have known what I'd have thought  
When I saw what was showing,  
But I've got nothing new at all,  
That wrapping is a jest.  
Your sense of humour really stinks,  
I'm not the least impressed! '  
'And nor am I' his curt reply  
'Now just you hang about! '  
He started getting angry

And his anger made him shout.  
'Why not unwrap the bloody thing?  
I've got you something nice.'

She did - and found inside the car  
A pair of dangling dice.

Terry Donovan

# A Fallen Leaf

A fallen leaf floats by to who knows where?  
Upturned and sailing like a little ship.  
Glider-like it fluttered through the air  
Its usefulness no more to oak branch tip.  
Fading shades of gold and wrinkled brown,  
Majestic green a mem'ry of its past.  
Discarded like its friends it tumbled down,  
A moment's history not planned to last.  
It floats by like the life I used to know,  
It has no purpose, destiny or goal,  
But has no mind to think and wonder why,  
It has no heart nor figment of a soul.  
It once gave life to such a mighty tree.  
I watch it pass and think it could be me.

Terry Donovan

# A Fatal Mistake

Money was no object,  
She had a wealthy dad  
And when he kicked the bucket,  
He left her all he had.

She bought a gleaming sports car  
And wardrobes full of clothes,  
She ate in London's hottest spots,  
Had surgeons change her nose.

She so enjoyed her comforts  
And to fit the life she led  
She took a trip Harrods  
And bought a water-bed.

And, in spite of central heating  
And quilts of finest down,  
A large electric blanket.  
She always went to town.

But this was her undoing  
And led to her demise.  
One night she laid upon her bed  
And closed her tired eyes

Not knowing that the water-bed  
Had got a little leak.  
She died in circumstances  
Which were something of a freak.

The water from the water-bed,  
The electric blanket hot,  
The two collaborated soon  
And that then was her lot.

She slept on fully unaware  
And as the dawn approached,  
The combination killed her.  
Next day they found her - poached.



Terry Donovan

# A Present From The Past

I watched her slowly coming down the stairs.  
Such beauty I had rarely seen before,  
A smile that said she'd put away her cares,  
That she was living in my world once more.  
I kissed her on each cheek, I squeezed her hand  
How proud I'd be to have her on my arm!  
As in that red silk dress she looked so grand  
And I, for one, was captured by her charm.  
At times like this one has to thank the Lord  
Who takes away but gives us back so much.  
This woman in the dress that I adored,  
That long-forgotten, warming, loving touch.  
'I wish that mum was here too see, ' she sighed.  
'You're in her dress -she will be! ' I replied.

Terry Donovan

# A Reason To Believe?

You don't need a reason to believe,  
It happens on its own.  
Belief belies all logic  
And all that's seen and known

For in this world of misery,  
Injustice, greed and hate,  
Illness, dying, needless pain,  
Disasters caused by fate

If there were reason to believe  
It would be very odd  
That people knowing what they do  
Could still believe in God.

Terry Donovan

# A Tiny Seed Of Doubt

I had a tiny seed of doubt,  
I laughed at first, it's true  
I even tried to spit it out  
But couldn't and it grew.

It grew for it was being fed,  
Its incubation brief,  
And as it grew became instead  
Not doubt but sheer belief.

And as the little acorn  
Becomes a giant tree,  
What started as a tiny seed  
Became reality.

Our doubts are traitors, it's been said,  
But look out for the liar  
And ask what put them in your head.  
There's no smoke without fire.

Terry Donovan

# A Vision In Black

I was waiting for a taxi on another shopping day  
When I saw a vision pull into the motorcycle bay.

The sweetest girl you ever saw, a gleaming black machine,  
The nicest combination that I have ever seen.

She wore a one-piece leather, the shape of all things nice.  
I stood and did a double-take and then I did it twice.

She slowly pulled her helmet off and shook her long blonde hair  
It fell about her shoulders. And I fell then and there.

Then what a shame, the taxi came and I was forced to leave,  
Had one last look and buckled up, my heart still on my sleeve.

And now there's one thing on my mind, I sit all day and pine.  
Oh what a happy man I'd be if that motorbike was mine.

Terry Donovan

# All I Want For Christmas

All I want for Christmas is to wake up with you there  
Beside me as you were in times not long ago.  
For stockings, decorations, wrapped-up gifts I have no care.  
Without you these things I don't want to know.  
On a day we should be merry I for one will be so blue  
And pass the time in dismal solitude.  
When I'm looking at your photo I'll be smiling that is true,  
My only retrospective interlude.  
No giving or receiving on the morning will take place,  
No loitering beneath the mistletoe,  
The day I know will drag along at leaden-footed pace;  
No more that well-remembered Yo-Ho-Ho!  
Exchanging presents used to be such fun.  
Wish you'd be here and I could give you one.

Terry Donovan

# All Systems Go

I love my old computer more each day,  
I don't know what I'd do without her here.  
We spend so many happy hours at play,  
Gone are the times when daily life was drear.  
The things I try to do she understands,  
My fingers on her keyboard make her day,  
Her 'ssorted software's putty in my hands,  
Together with my hardware, plug and play.  
We do so much together it's just great,  
She sits and waits for me to turn her on,  
I open up her Windows 98  
Then click upon her icons and she's gone.  
She lies and waits to see what I'll do next  
And loves it whether graphic or plain text.

Terry Donovan

# Alone Again

She left me once, she left me twice,  
But after several days  
Returned and asked forgiveness,  
Saw the folly of her ways.

Once bitten twice shy it's always said  
And I was bitten twice,  
Yet I believed her promise  
That it wouldn't happen thrice.

A promise that she meant to keep,  
A love that would endure -  
But once again it's happened  
And I'm sat alone once more.

And this time she has gone for good  
But nobody is scoffin';  
This time she didn't run away  
But went off in a coffin.

I've had to take it in my stride.  
My friends say I am plucky,  
Inside I smile and tell myself  
'It is true - third time lucky! '

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Terry Donovan



# An Angel Has To Do What An Angel Has To To

He walked away into the night,  
His knuckles swollen from the fight,  
A smile beneath his swollen eye,  
Much satisfaction in his sigh.

He left behind a crumpled lump  
A man who'd had a well-earned thump,  
A bully belly filled with beer,  
A crowd that had recoiled in fear.

He'd done his bit and saved the day,  
Restored some order to the fray.  
They watched him as went from view  
Lost in the shadows he passed through.

"Forgive me, Lord", he stopped to pray,  
"I know that's not the angels' way".  
The Lord said "When you deal with man,  
You have to do the best you can..

I saw you really had no choice,  
I saw those that you helped rejoice.  
Now go and read the Holy Book  
And do some work on that left hook."

Terry Donovan

# An Open Book

I took a book from off the shelf,  
It opened to a page  
And what I saw transported me  
Back to a happy age.

It wasn't words or pictures  
That my memories caressed,  
But a flower you picked long ago  
And in the pages pressed.

And in my mind I pictured you,  
So young and without care,  
Dancing through the meadows  
With the sunlight in your hair.

You picked a single poppy  
And I watched you running past.  
I'll always wonder if you knew  
That day would be your last.

Your smile was extra wide that day,  
The sparkle in your eyes  
Was brighter than the sunshine  
And was bluer than the skies.

And in my mind for ever more  
That's how you'll always look,  
And you always come to me  
When I open up that book.

Terry Donovan

# Angel

I saw an angel with a broken wing  
I saw an angel cry  
I mended it with bits of string  
And told her she could fly.

I handed her my handkerchief  
To wipe the tear away  
And told her all was well again  
I think I made her day.

She thanked me with an angel's kiss  
And like a butterfly  
She closed her wings then opened them  
And rose into the sky.

Now she is back in heaven  
And I'm here on the ground  
And I think somehow that we got  
Our roles the wrong way round.

Terry Donovan

# Ashes To Ashes

When Cuthbert was cremated she was sad  
But taking home his ashes she was glad  
For in a way she'd always have him there  
His company forever she would share.

She kept them in a special cut-glass pot  
Which from a local antique shop she'd got  
And on the mantelpiece it always stood  
And she was happy he'd be there for good.

But visitors would see it in the room  
And that is was an ashtray would presume  
And in it cigarette ash they would drop  
And very soon they filled it to the top.

Her sister, seeing this, was quite appalled  
And said there's much more ash since I last called.  
'That's very true, Miranda', she replied  
'He's really put some weight on since he died'.

Terry Donovan

# At Your Age You Ought To Know Better

He climbed to the top of the wardrobe,  
Called out 'GERONIMO! '  
And threw himself towards his wife  
Who lay in wait below.

But he didn't have his glasses on  
And couldn't see the way  
And landed half a meter  
From where she, hopeful, lay.

The mattress it was springy  
And he shot back in the air  
And landed on the carpet,  
Broke the dressing table chair.

And that's not all he damaged  
And he let out such a yell,  
His wife ran to the telephone,  
Gave 999 a bell.

The doctor came, he calmed her down,  
Saw how this had upset her,  
Then and said to him with a doctor's frown,  
'At your age you ought to know better'.

Terry Donovan

# Autumn Leaves Its Scar

When I walk ankle-deep in autumn leaves,  
Head down and collar up against the rain,  
My thoughts transport me back to happier days  
When, shuffling leaves knee-deep along the lane,

I'd saunter home from school without a care  
As wind-fanned rainfall soaked my every inch,  
Scattering the leaves with wellied feet  
And soaking up the spray without a flinch.

As roadside rivers rushed to greet my trek,  
With makeshift dams of leaves I'd block their course,  
Each putting up a brief quixotic front  
Till yielding to the ravine's rain-backed force.

Such was my journey home those autumn days  
Until I squelched at last to my back door,  
A puddle of my own inside each boot  
- But knowing what a treat I had in store.

A cup of tea, some home-made raspberry jam,  
A warming by the open fire's glow,  
To sit and read a comic by the hearth,  
Hear Childrens' Hour on the radio.

But luxury to me in those young days  
Was a bath towel and warmed-up change of clothes,  
Replacements for my cast-off sodden gear -  
And what a pleasure getting out of those!

What a treat that transformation made,  
From drowned rat dripping on the kitchen floor  
To ecstasy of warmth and cosiness,  
What price my mother's welcome at the door!

Now, walking ankle-deep in autumn leaves,  
Collar up, head down against the rain,  
I kick the leaves in anger from my path.  
The homeward journey brings me only pain.

There won't be any welcome at the door,  
No warmth to ease my wracked and battered frame,  
For those I loved, like autumn leaves, have dropped,  
Returning to the earth from where they came.

Terry Donovan

Terry Donovan

# Away Day

Alarm bell rings  
Blackbird sings  
Sun greets open eyes  
Sleep was clover  
Now it's over  
Time to wake and rise.

Kettle, coffee,  
Now I'm off e-  
lated cos today's the day  
Suitcase ready,  
By bye, Teddy,  
Holiday, I'm on my way.

Strife behind me  
You won't find me  
I shall hide and you shall seek.  
I'll be where  
There is no care  
In my own heaven one whole week.

Terry Donovan



# Baby Giraffe

When we think of a giraffe  
We think of that long neck  
That reaches to the tree tops  
While its feet are on the deck

But it isn't just its neck that's long;  
On extended legs they come  
And there's six or seven feet between  
Ground level and their bum

And what is quite amazing is  
When they are giving birth  
The little one just has to fall  
That distance to the earth.

The poor wee thing must be quite stunned  
And woken with a jerk  
And straight away it tries to stand  
On legs that that don't quite work.

It staggers upright, sways about  
As best as it is able,  
Its legs in all directions  
Like a boot sale coffee table.

Then having got that sorted out  
And after one last shudder,  
It has to find its mother  
And get started on the udder.

Oh, mother nature's wonderful.  
Her methods aren't that clever,  
But everything works out all right.  
Giraffes go on forever.

Terry Donovan

# Beached Again

I wrote my love a sonnet in the sand  
Beneath a lovers' sky of endless blue.  
She read it and she gently squeezed my hand  
And promised she would always love me true.  
She lay back, closed her eyes and soaked the sun,  
I sat and eyed the beauty which was mine,  
The ups and downs which will forever stun  
And thought about a future just divine.  
The sun went down, replaced by ev'ning breeze,  
We walked and talked the way that lovers will,  
Said words we like to hear, we knew would please  
While all around the world stood silent still.

But then the tide, it washed my words away.  
Short-lived they were as all the love that day.

Terry Donovan

# Best Friends

The best of friends are those you never meet  
But have a lot in common from afar,  
The sort who make an empty day complete  
With words alone that reach you where you are.  
The sort who let you know you're not alone  
And make you feel that life is well worth while,  
With words on paper, greetings on the phone  
Or something on the screen to make you smile.  
Best friends are always with you in your mind  
And let you know that you remain in theirs,  
They'll listen when you're ready to unwind  
And let you share their worries and their cares.  
Best friends stand by you though you stand apart.  
And all they give or want comes from the heart.

Terry Donovan

# Castaway

Life on a desert island isn't much fun.  
One palm tree for shelter, the sea and the sun.  
Civilisation horizons away.  
Not even a seagull to hear what you say.  
Wake up each morning and wait for the night.  
Tomorrow and yesterday white after white.  
Nothing to live for just being alive  
The best you can hope for if you can survive.  
Nobody misses you, memories soon slip.  
You might just as well have gone down with the ship.  
You tried lighting fires and sending up smoke  
But no one was looking so that was a joke.  
You're stuck where you are while you go round the bend.  
You sit and write poems and wait for the end.

Terry Donovan

# Changing Directions

Straight ahead backwards  
And you end up  
Where you are.  
You don't know  
Where you came from  
Or how you got this far.  
East it East  
And West is West,  
You can't sit down  
On a dead man's chest,  
It's one for sorrow,  
Two for joy.  
Just when you're thinking  
Land ahoy!  
There's water water  
Everywhere.  
And is there hope?  
Nope. Just despair.  
It's time to change directions,  
Time to change your mind,  
Right or left?  
You're in a cleft.  
And the door's slammed shut behind.

Terry Donovan

# Covered Love

The yellow and brown of last year's leaves,  
The patches of bluebell blue  
The footpath worn by ancient feet,  
The memories of you.

This is the wood where we once walked,  
Our welcome little world  
Where, on our secret rendezvous,  
Our love became unfurled.

You had your life and I had mine  
And they were worlds apart  
Except for when we walked through here  
And shared a single heart

And no-one knew but me and you  
That weekly you and I  
Would sit upon a fallen tree  
To love and live a lie.

And no-one know how close we came,  
How hard the line we drew  
Although the friendly trees looked on,  
The long-gone bluebells knew.

And now I walk through memories  
Of very-nearly days,  
Of shared unexpectation  
And the parting of the ways

But don't feel any sadness.  
How could I when I know  
I held you close just long enough  
So many years ago?

Terry Donovan

# Crane-Fly

As though running - in borrowed legs,  
He lumbers across the table-top,  
Lurching forward,  
Then to the right  
And to the left -  
Pauses for a breath  
And tries to remember  
How to collapse with dignity  
On Inarticulate limbs.  
Not knowing  
Where he's been  
Or where he's headed  
Or why he is  
Where he is now,  
He sways  
As he weighs up  
the situation.  
He remembers the window  
Where half a life-time  
Was wasted  
In a hasty flight To nowhere  
Unable to go where  
Far horizons called.  
And sliding,  
Dropped by  
Anonymous opposition,  
On wings that didn't work  
Onto legs that wouldn't work.  
Unstable,  
But back on the table  
On those ponderous haunches,  
He wanders if another launch is  
Out of the question.

Terry Donovan

# Days

Whatever the weather  
The days are grey  
And go on forever  
The same old way  
Then we wrap them up  
And throw them away  
Another one starts  
The same old thing  
Another day long  
As a piece of string  
Another day wasted  
Another day's end  
Hour into hour  
It all seems to blend  
Horizons are hazy  
The journey is slow  
And all that we know is  
the cock's going to crow.

Terry Donovan



# Elephant Down

They told us we could use another elephant  
But we knew what they meant and couldn't see the point.

So we decided to fill in the hole  
And cover it over.

We worked into the early hours.  
We cried, some inwardly, some outwardly,  
According to rank.

Eventually the sounds of the night  
Got quieter  
And quieter,  
Then ended.

Ended in the saddest silence ever heard.

Terry Donovan

# Enigma

They said the grass was greener  
On the other side.  
To find out if it really was,  
I crossed the fence and tried.

I think it was, in retrospect,  
Was glad I'd had a go -  
But didn't stay there very long.  
(Better the devil you know) .

And now I'm really puzzled.  
What to do for best?  
Throw caution to the wind again  
Or feather my own nest?

Terry Donovan

# Eric

Even though  
They were clean,  
He put them in the washing machine.  
No longer frowned  
As he watched them go round.  
After a minute and a half  
He started to laugh  
And continued to grin  
As he watched them spin.  
He took them out  
Still slightly damp,  
Hung them up beside his lamp.  
And laughed out loud  
While they were drying.  
Or was he laughing?

Was he crying?

Terry Donovan

# Faith, Hope And Clarity

When I wake in the morning, will I find  
That this was nothing but a lavish dream,  
A magic moment conjured in the mind,  
A mirage with a wishful-thinking theme?  
Once more, reality the status quo,  
A consequence of castles in the air,  
A lonesome lover who will never know  
The pleasure of the treasure that you bare?  
Or will this little miracle prevail,  
This little world of wonder never cease,  
Will I still drift with no wind in my sail,  
Another painted picture, party piece?

I lay my body down to sleep and pray  
That you'll still be here at the break of day.

Terry Donovan

## For Jenny

There she goes, our dearest friend.  
As all good things come to an end,  
Her life on earth is over now  
And we must carry on somehow,  
Her memory we must carry on.  
With that she never will be gone.  
We'll weep a while but still be glad  
To think of those good times we had,  
Glad we had her love to share  
Glad she knew that we did care,  
Glad that when she came to part,  
She did so with a happy heart.

We'll miss those dinners that she cooked  
That tasted scrumptious as they looked.

The plants around the garden may  
Keep wond'ring why she went away;  
She tended them with love and care,  
They grew for her when she was there.  
But they'll remember her green fingers  
And they will show a love that lingers,  
They'll open up again and bloom,  
Perhaps to lift us from our gloom;  
For what she loved her soul attends,  
What she started never ends.

We have to cry, we have to mourn,  
With death an emptiness is born,  
But she's now in a better place  
And where we feel an empty space,  
It won't be empty long, we'll find.  
It's filled with the love she left behind.

Terry Donovan

## From C & A To Wait And See

Who'd be Father Christmas? It's really not much fun  
And I for one won't half be glad when the Christmas season's done.  
Dressed up in all this clobber with this silly bloomin hat,  
When I'm walking down the High Street I don't half feel a prat.  
And I've got this grotty grotto at the back of C & A's  
Where there's always queues of little kids on their Christmas holidays  
And I have to greet each one of them with a chuckle and a smile  
( 'And don't forget to 'ho-ho-ho' at least once in a while! ' )  
I have to hold their grubby hands and whisper in their ears  
And pose while mummies photograph me talking to their dears;  
I ask them what they want when I come round on Christmas day  
( I could lay odds of ten to one what each one's going to say ) .  
Computers are the favourite and electronic games;  
Nintendo, Sega, Quantum - I can rattle off the names,  
And when I reach into my sack to pick them out a gift, .  
They look at it disgustedly and walk away quite miffed.  
They're never ever satisfied; it isn't hard to tell  
That a plastic penny whistle doesn't go down very well;  
Some of them are lucky 'cos they'll never know how near  
They came to leaving Santa with a clip behind the ear.  
I'm so glad when Christmas eve comes round and I can close the grotto,  
Pick up my pay and dump this gear, go home and get plain blotto,  
Relax and put my feet up 'til it's time to go to bed;  
But first of all I pour a drink and make some jam and bread  
Which I put up on the mantelpiece beside the wind-up clock  
And with it leave a little note for Santa - and a sock..

Terry Donovan

# Gone But Not

I look at your empty rocking chair  
And wish you were still sitting there.  
I look at your framed photograph  
And wish I could still hear you laugh.  
I put the kettle on and brew,  
Wish I was making tea for two.  
The radio plays our favourite song,  
But without you here it sounds so wrong.  
My cigarette smoke fills the air –  
If you were here I wouldn't dare!  
I'm lonely but I'm not too sad  
Remembering the times we had  
And knowing that you've not gone far  
And keep me with you were you are  
Just as I always keep you here  
While in my mind I hold you dear.  
They couldn't keep you in that box  
I know – cos your rocking chair still rocks..

Terry Donovan

## Got Your Advent Calander Yet?

No advent calendar for us,  
To have a daily peep,  
To know the day was coming,  
When we'd waken from our sleep  
And the waiting would be over  
And the very day had come  
To see and what he had brought us,  
What we had from dad and mum.

Instead, we had a window  
Which was colourless and plain  
And every day we'd open it  
And peer along the lane.  
And we wouldn't look for snowmen  
Or for Santa with a sleigh  
We'd look for signs of daddy  
Coming home for Christmas day.

And we left the decorations  
And the baubles in the box  
While we looked at daddy's photographs  
And mummy darned his socks.  
There was no such thing as Christmas,  
All we thought about was war.  
We looked out that little window.  
Mummy listened for the door.

Terry Donovan



# Grandad In The Wind

Today the sunshine seemed to say  
"Get on your bike and get away,  
Too long cooped up in here you've spent"  
And so I did – got up and went.

In the saddle, leather clad,  
Start the engine, don't sound bad,  
Find first gear, pull down visor.  
Getting old, but not much wiser.

Loads of revs then dropp the clutch,  
Great vibrations in the crutch,  
Fat back tyre, loads of grip,  
Off like a rocket, not one slip.

Country lanes that wind and twist,  
Lots of braking, not much wrist.  
Banking over round the bends  
Using luck where logic ends.

Finally a long straight strip,  
Nothing coming, let it rip.  
What's the hurry? Why full bore?  
Cos that's what motorbikes are for!

Eighty, ninety, this is fun.  
Sailing past the magic ton,  
Trees and hedges flashing by,  
The rushing road assaults the eye.

But all too soon the fun must stop,  
Stamp on brakes, watch speedo drop,  
Through the gearbox, down to first,  
Satisfied a pent-up thirst.

That was fun, it made me glow,  
U-turn, have another go.  
An aged rebel without a cause,  
A wild one in long thermal drawers

An easy rider high on speed,  
A junky high without the weed,  
For just a moment, maybe two,  
A different world, a different view.

Me and the devil joined in play.  
The sun has looked the other way.

Terry Donovan

# Grandad Said

Grandad said  
'Being dead  
Is not too bad at all.  
You can chose to work  
Or chose to shirk  
And you don't have to go to school! '

Everyone is friendly,  
You don't get any grief,  
You're never tired or hungry  
And you even get new teeth.

And Granny, she's a cracker!  
She's full of fun and games,  
She hasn't got an ache or pain,  
Stopped looking like Sid James.

Of course' he said, 'We miss you  
And we're sorry you were sad.  
Just think about us now and then  
And love your mum and dad'.

And then he threw my football back,  
Said, 'You get on your bike.  
I'd better not stay out too long -  
You know what Granny's like! '

He turned into shaft of light,  
He gave a little wiggle  
And as he disappeared from sight,  
I'm sure I heard him giggle.

Terry Donovan

# Grave Humour

They stood at the graveside, two strangers  
But so much in common to share;  
One was his wife, one his mistress.  
Both of them had to be there.

Marge was the girl in the office,  
The reason he always worked late.  
She loved him but he only used her.  
Another sad victim of fate.

Tina, his wife of a lifetime,  
Was the woman who buttered his bread,  
Ironed his shirts, did the cooking  
And nursed him until he was dead.

Now they stood while he was buried,  
Each with a pain in her heart,  
Mourning a life that had ended  
Of which each was such a big part.

Then a voice from the grave had them startled.  
It said 'From now on the grass could be greener.  
Look to your futures with passion.  
Don't cry for me, Marge and Tina'.

Terry Donovan

# Green Bits

How can I forget?

I tried,

I sighed,

I even lied.

But though you were gone,

The light still came on.

Every time.

End they were there.

Where you

With true abandon

Left your mark.

And knee-length socks

Flecked with coal dust

Laughed for you.

You cow.

Terry Donovan

# Healed With A Kiss

I've read what healing hands can do  
To heal both pain and woes.  
They heal the sick and injured,  
But how they do - who knows?

Now I remember my young days;  
With powers just like this,  
My mother fixed so many wounds  
With just her healing kiss.

Of course, the healing's from within  
And must come from the heart  
To send get-well instructions  
To the sore or niggling part.

A finger cut, a poor grazed knee,  
Hands frozen from the cold,  
'Let mummy kiss it better'  
And it's gone, lo and behold!

No medicine, no nasty pills,  
No bandages or plaster -  
By miracle or magic,  
Mum's kiss worked so much faster.

That was so many years ago  
But leaves me with a feeling  
That somewhere from an unknown source  
Hands get the power for healing.

You have to stitch a gaping wound,  
A fracture needs a crutch,  
But mothers' kisses, healing hands,  
Can do so very much.

ps. In emergencies, dad's kisses work just as well!

Terry Donovan

# Heatwave

Remember in those long-gone winter days  
When, wrapped in jumpers by the fireside,  
We yearned for sunshine, blue sky and heat-haze  
And deck chair semi-nude days sat outside?  
Oh how we wished that it was baking hot  
And thought of how much better we would feel  
Eating salad in some picnic spot  
Watching arms go brown and start to peel.  
Well, now it's here, the heatwave of our dreams,  
Worn out, lethargic, we sit in the shade -  
This isn't heaven after all, it seems  
As we, like memories we harboured, fade.  
It's either blooming cold or blooming hot  
And what we want is never what we've got!

Terry Donovan



# Hello

We only speak from time to time  
In text on screen and words that rhyme  
But every time I see your name  
It adds a flicker to my flame.

Though far apart, for just a while  
We share a moment and a smile  
And on the net there seems to be  
Nobody else, just you and me.

And for a while it seems enough  
The mouse and keyboard do their stuff  
Though all too soon we're moving on,  
The page has changed, the moment gone

Reality brings back the gloom  
Of sitting in an empty room.  
We never really were a pair.

I'll have a game of Solitaire.

Terry Donovan

# Hertzog Park

Remember the day  
they pulled Granny  
from the mangle  
while you angled  
your frisbee  
at my building blocks  
and knocked  
the stuffing out of my  
rainbow?

Unlaid heads  
on unmade beds  
bit the bullet  
while you burnt my tent.

Wigwam,  
Thank you ma'm.

Terry Donovan

## I Wish.....

I wish that I could whisper in your ear  
And you would know exactly what I mean,  
My meaning coming over very clear,  
No lines for you to look for in between.  
My written word I sit and think about,  
Erasing words, replacing them with more,  
So when you see it there is little doubt  
No strings attached, it's you that I adore.  
If only I could do that when we speak  
And let you know exactly how I feel,  
Come out directly with the words I seek  
And make my vague endeavours something real.  
I write and all the right words just appear -  
Why don't they when I whisper in your ear?

Terry Donovan

# I'M Always Dreaming

I used to tell my friends at school  
Our garden had a swimming pool  
And flowers like they'd never seen,  
A fountain and a bowling green,  
Trees weighed down with big ripe pears  
That I could reach and pick upstairs.

They used to really envy me,  
Outspoken in their jealousy,  
And wished that they could say the same  
And I would shrug, say 'What a shame! '

Then after school we'd say goodbye,  
I'd take the low road, they the high  
And Toby, waiting by the shack  
Would wag his tail to see me back.

I'd stroke him and survey the farce  
Of two square yards of waist-high grass,  
A broken pram, a two-wheeled trike,  
A one-time fence, a rusty spike.

I'd have my tea, go out again  
And play with Toby in the lane  
Until it started getting dark.  
I'd go back in and he would bark.

Then he'd lie down and sleep instead  
When he knew I was off to bed.  
I'd close my eyes with great delight  
To dream the dream I dreamed each night.

I'd go outside. Wow! This is cool!  
The handyman has cleaned the pool,  
The water's clear as crystal glass,  
I'd throw my clothes down on the grass  
Then in I'd jump - and Toby, too.  
We'd swim together all day through.

Every night that filled my head.  
And every night I wet the bed.

Terry Donovan

# I'M Not Too Sure What Love Is

I'm not too sure what love is and I've never seen the rules,  
I know it makes some people strong, and others it makes fools.  
I know it has its moments, making people walk on air,  
Then it seems so very often just to lead them to despair.

It's so really enigmatic, love is happy, love is sad.  
I'm not too sure what love is. Is it good or is it bad?  
And I am so uncertain. Would I cry or would I smile?  
Why can't you have a sample, like a seven-day home trial?

But no, that wouldn't work of course - that's just not long enough,  
Cos you'd have rose-tinted glasses, see the smooth but not the rough.  
Because, in its early stages love is known to be all fun,  
You share a common vacuum and think you think as one.

But when the party's over and you open up your eyes,  
You find that just for starters there is so much compromise.  
It's give and take and go without and what I have is yours.  
You can't be half a couple without giving for the cause.

It works, it does, I know it does, I've seen with my own eyes  
Young lovers growing hand-in-hand with love that never dies,  
But while that gives encouragement, I've seen it fail as well,  
Young lovers growing separate, young happiness old hell.

So I'm just keeping clear of it, not going to take a chance.  
Love loiters, but I'll keep it out with just a sideways glance.  
And though I sometimes feel like jumping in feet first,  
I'll never let it happen for I'll always fear the worst.

I might be right, I might be wrong, to me it's all a quiz.  
But who has got the answer? Who can tell me what love is?  
No-one can and no-one will. I know that if I knew,  
Beyond a doubt I'd try it out on nobody but you.

For you are always on my mind my every living day,  
The pleasure of just knowing you will never go away.  
I may not want to fall in love, I'm just too scared, and yet  
What I feel in my heart must be as close as one can get.

Terry Donovan

# In A Flask

How glad I was  
I'd kept it in a flask  
You can keep it bottled  
And it's always there  
But it doesn't keep warm  
Or totally retain  
Its original ambience  
Its spirit  
But  
In a flask  
when you need it  
It's there fresh as the day  
Fresh as the moment  
Fresh as the memory  
Nothing lost

But only for a moment  
Was I glad  
Soon I was sad  
Sadder than ever  
For though it was clever  
To keep it thermosed  
And true enough  
It is perfectly preserved  
Its aura  
More or less intact  
It can't be freed

And now I need it  
But if I unscrew the top  
How can I stop it  
Escaping  
In  
The thin convection  
Of the common air  
Beyond my reach  
Beyond my salvation



What use to me is  
A soul  
That must remain  
In a perpetual  
vacuum

Terry Donovan

## In My Dream

The sinking sun a halo round your head,  
Your body in a graceful silhouette,  
A heartbeat in each tiptoed step you tread,  
Embossed the image, never to forget.  
A dream from which I never wish to wake,  
A sleeping answer to a long-said prayer,  
A silken thread that time alone will break,  
A breathless promise in the night-time air.  
An apprehension of your utmost charms,  
A wishful-thinking longing, manifest,  
Drawn by the magnet of my open arms,  
The aim of Eros put to final test.  
So far so good, so heavenly sublime.  
I hope this dream goes into extra time!

Terry Donovan

## It Wasn'T Love

It wasn't love but something more intense,  
It had no future let alone a past,  
No first class hotel room, but wooden fence,  
No harvest moon did silken shadows cast.  
No violins but cats that screech at night,  
No flowers but a thistle cast aside,  
Everything was wrong and all was right  
But needs were must, convention was denied.  
No stars to see except the stars we saw,  
No licence but a blessing in disguise.  
No 'don't disturb' sign hanging on the door.  
Not sensible, but doubtless worldly-wise.  
A giant step and yet a step too small,  
Two sets of tears, two smiles that said it all.

Terry Donovan

# It's Just A House

It's just a house, like any house  
That you might see perchance,  
Nothing special, nothing odd,  
Not worth a second glance.

That's just one more suburban wife  
In her suburban car,  
Like any other one you'd see  
Around here or afar.

That's just a child, like any child,  
The sort you might ignore –  
But did you ever see a child  
That beautiful before?

Can you remember bluer eyes,  
A more beguiling smile,  
And have you ever seen before  
A more angelic style?

I'm just a man, another man,  
A stranger passing by.  
A man she wouldn't look at twice.  
She wouldn't see me cry.

She wouldn't look and wonder why  
I walk away so sad.  
And wouldn't know not long ago  
She used to call me Dad.

/TCD

Terry Donovan

# Know Going Back

I didn't know that it was love  
or how I felt about you,  
but now I know cos I can't go  
a single day without you.

I thought I'd outgrown all that stuff,  
clock-watching, heart a-flutter,  
I thought I'd grown aloof and tough,  
but you melt me like butter.

I never knew that I went through  
each day without a cause,  
slowly vegetating fast  
behind a wall of doors.

I didn't know there'd be such joy  
to cushion each day's end  
knowing I have got and am  
a very special friend.

And I'd forgotten what it meant  
with no what, why or wherefore,  
to know that each tomorrow means  
there'll be someone to care for

Now there's one thing I'm certain of  
with knowing what I do.  
I never could go back to how  
I was, when without you.

Terry Donovan

# Lady On A Train

I looked up from my paper  
For I'm sure I felt her stare,  
Our eyes met and they locked and  
Something mystic filled the air.

I couldn't turn my gaze away,  
But didn't feel the need.  
I felt she didn't want me to.  
Here eyes said she agreed.

Both rooted to that moment,  
Once two strangers, now as one,  
Two futures and two histories  
At once rolled into one.

And in that railway carriage  
Something happened to my heart.  
Something happened to my system.  
My perspective fell apart.

I knew she, too, was going through  
The very same routine.  
I read her eyes and she read mine.  
We both read in between.

Then that new world I'd entered in  
Was blown to bits because  
Her train pulled out the station  
And mine stayed where it was.

Now, til I die I'll wonder why  
Such depth of feeling grew  
To no avail and left no trail.  
I love her. I love who?

And in my mind no doubt I find.  
She feels the same as well.  
Will we meet again in heaven?  
If we don't, I'll go to hell.

Terry Donovan

# Last Love

A chip fell in love with a small piece of cod,  
It felt really normal and not a bit odd  
And though they both knew they had not long to live,  
Both knew they had love unbridled to give.

His love was unfilleted, right from the heart,  
The scent of her vinegar right from the start  
Had warmed his desire, his will to get at her.  
To woo her and coo her and bond with her batter.

She, too, was taken and so starry-eyed,  
She found him so straight cut and so freshly fried,  
No crinkle-cut cutie but chunky and whole,  
To meet a chip like him had been her life's goal.

They lay side by side on the edge of the plate,  
Gave each other strength while awaiting their fate.  
They'd know life was limited, they'd soon be freed  
From their life on this earth when the menu decreed.

They cuddled up closely so nothing would spoil  
Their last greasy moments on this mortal coil.  
An odd combination but such a good match.  
They had their last kiss then they slid down the hatch.

Terry Donovan



# Life Country-Style

A sky of grizzly angry grey  
Foreboding, opens up the day.  
The butterflies, the wasp, the bee,  
The birds that should be on the tree,  
Stay hidden, loath to venture out.  
The spider dallies in the spout.  
Flower petals stay shut tight,  
Still waiting for the end of night.  
And then appears a patch of blue,  
The clouds relax to let it through  
And slow but sure out comes the sun  
And suddenly the day's begun -  
A summer day of life and hope,  
Despondent once, now all can cope.  
The flowers open up and smile.  
All life returns - in country-style.

Terry Donovan

# Life Goes On

Hand-in-hand they stood side by side  
As together silent tears they cried,  
Comfort in each other found  
As the coffin dropped into the ground.

A wife, a mother, taken away,  
A last farewell on this sad day.  
They stood there, hearts and minds as one,  
Step-father he and he step-son.

No greater loss had either known,  
No more important seed unsown,  
Yet for an instant he was glad  
To hear the words 'Let's go home, dad'

Terry Donovan

# Lonesome Blues As Such

Another tear  
falls in my beer  
as I sit here  
and sigh oh dear  
wish you were near  
I try to lose  
these lonesome blues  
in pints of booze  
but it's no use  
I've got it bad  
and feel so sad  
I must be mad  
to pine so much  
for your sweet touch  
but what the hell  
for you I fell in love  
pell mell  
how could I tell  
when Cupid's dart  
would pierce my heart  
and start  
to take control□  
of mind and soul□  
and make a goal□  
of loving you□  
the way I do  
just wanting to  
be courting woo□  
but deary me□  
it's not to be□  
I didn't see□  
for love is blind□  
and so unkind□  
to mortal mind□  
which seeks to find□  
a ready mate□  
to stimulate□  
and titillate□  
unused romance

and I'd no chance  
for just one glance□  
was all it took□  
my heart was shook□  
it's shaking still□  
and always will□  
for you fulfil□  
my every dream□  
and it may seem□  
my life-long scheme□  
for joy and bliss□  
must end like this□  
and I'm to miss  
what all men need  
most have indeed  
someone to share  
for whom to care  
who's always there  
to make a pair  
since Eve and Adam  
most men have had 'em  
so why not I  
why should I cry  
into my beer  
while others leer  
at dolly birds  
and whisper words  
of you know what  
look eye to eye  
and fawn and sigh  
while love goes by  
my  
lonesome world  
I'm left ungirled  
ray joy unfurled  
my heart unwound  
my mate unfound  
my my I'm sad  
I've never had  
the love I've sought  
you won't be caught  
you're like a fort

with moat around  
and if I drowned  
you wouldn't care  
nor turn a hair  
so my despair  
I bear alone  
so I'll just moan  
into my glass  
about the farce  
of thinking you  
could want me too  
and I'll stay blue  
my whole life through  
and cry boo hoo  
what else to do  
you've left me numb  
the future's glum  
I'm just a bum  
a drunken dope  
bereft of hope  
oh woe is me  
just let me be  
to prop this bar  
and sink a jar  
you get the gist  
I'm staying pissed.

Terry Donovan

## Long Story

Our Sammy's had an accident,  
His condition's touch and go,  
Run over by a steam roller  
(He always was so slow) .

He's in the local hospital  
And lucky to be alive.  
If you should want to visit,  
He's in wards three, four and five.

Terry Donovan

# Looking Back

I thought that I was happy  
before you came to me.  
I thought that life was turning out  
as good as good can be.

I thought I had the things I need  
to make my life complete.  
I had my health, I had my wealth,  
and life was all up-beat.

I thought that I was happy,  
everything seemed good because  
I didn't. have a worry.  
And, bugger me – I was!

Terry Donovan

# Love Sonnet

I hate it when we have to say goodbye

And I must turn and leave you once again.

The hours always pass so slowly by,

The sand falls through the hour-glass grain by grain.

And even knowing parting's not for long

This loneliness inside me can't console.

Without you with me life just seems so wrong,

The world I'm living in and empty hole.

I try to think of other things instead

But in my mind I don't know where to start.

I used to do my thinking in my head

But now it only happens in my heart.

And as the time drags, I must wonder why

When I'm with you it somehow learns to fly

Terry Donovan



# Lovely

Oh that was really lovely  
And such a nice surprise.  
When you woke me from my dreams  
Could scarce believe my eyes.

Oh that was really lovely  
So nice I'd quite forgot  
And it's so nice to start the day  
With something nice and hot.

Oh that was really lovely  
And what a change it made  
To wake to such an offer.  
I'm really glad I stayed.

Oh that was really lovely  
I'll remember till I'm dead  
The pleasure that you gave me  
With that cup of tea in bed.

Terry Donovan

# Mary

Mary had a little lamb  
To everyone's surprise.  
The wise men rolled their sleeves up  
And made some shepherd's pies.

They sold them to the Israelites  
Two shekels for a pound.  
The angel of the Lord came down  
And glory shone around.

Terry Donovan

# Mistakes

Bodies lying in the street  
Each one covered with a sheet  
Loved ones crying, children lost  
Words of solace cheaply tossed  
News reporters, TV crews,  
Something for tomorrow's news,  
Never mind, that's how it goes,  
They're dying daily, friends and foes.  
Mistakes are made. it just seems odd -  
I wonder daily, where is God?

Terry Donovan

# Moonlight

We lay on the beach together,  
The waves lapped at our feet.  
I ran my fingers through your hair -  
It felt like shredded wheat.

But then a beam of moonlight  
Shone upon your torso.  
By daylight you look sexy  
But late at night even more so.

And there we stayed till very late,  
Just you and me and the sand.  
The tide came in, the tide went out  
And everything was grand.

Yes, Margate beach by moonlight  
I always will recall.  
It may not be exotic -  
But did we have a ball!

Terry Donovan

# Moonlit Melons

Moonlit melons,  
Summer evening breeze,  
Seagulls sailing homeward,  
Somnulating seas,  
Wishy-washy wavelets,  
No-one passing by,  
Look and see the silence,  
Sand castles in the sky.  
No more 'Tiddely-om-pom-pom! '  
Or 'Come on in, it's great! ',  
No Punch and Judy on the prom  
Or donkeys full of hate.  
Just you and me and solitude  
To celebrate the night.  
Moonlit melons, summer breeze  
And pleasures infinite.

Terry Donovan

# Motorcycle Sonnet

A sixties sight I always liked to see,  
Those British motorbikes parked side by side  
While bikers packed inside the Busy Bee,  
The rendezvous of everybody's ride.  
Here Triumph, Norton, Matchless, BSA,  
And Vincent, Ariel and AJS,  
Were names that made mouths water in their day  
And nothing Japanese did we possess.  
All oily, smoky, proper big boys' toys  
That you could hear from half a mile away  
And when they passed you'd even smell the noise  
And grab your flying jacket, join the play.  
Now all you see are bikers 'born again'  
Who drive a Ford Mondeo in the rain.

Terry Donovan

# Mourning Glory

They lowered the coffin,  
The minister said his piece,  
A tear or two were shed  
And hugs exchanged.  
I smiled at you and  
You smiled back at me  
As off they drifted,  
Each step prearranged.

We stayed behind and  
Watched them fill the hole  
And shared some memories  
Of a time gone past  
We saw her trapped  
In silence for all time  
And thanked the Lord  
The job was done at last.

Terry Donovan

## Mugs Away!

Old Paddy he was mugged the other day  
When he popped out to have a pint or two.  
A group of youngsters stopped him on the way,  
Demanding money then they'd let him through.  
He told them where to go then they began  
To punch and kick him, pushed him to the ground.  
Then through his pockets grubby fingers ran,  
Relieving him of everything they found.  
Though in the end it wasn't much at all,  
Just two pounds fifty and some cigarettes.  
Their takings from this mugging was so small  
The state of Paddy filled them with regrets.

'Why did you fight so hard? ' one asked in shock.

'To save the fifty quid hid in my sock'.

Terry Donovan



# Mums On The Run

Stay indoors till after nine O'clock!  
It's hell out there and one almighty fray;  
Arnold Schwatzenegers in a frock  
Have set out and the school run's under way.  
In armoured cars and tanks they hit the road  
And for the school gate heedlessly they head,  
Forgetting they once read the highway code -  
You either clear the way or you are dead!  
White Van Man trembles in their mighty wake,  
The school bus stops and hides behind a tree,  
Pedestrians in doorways stand and shake,  
The cops are in café drinking tea.  
The children of the run-mums simply smile.  
It daily saves them walking half a mile.

Terry Donovan

# My Angel

It's all the little things you say and do,  
The way from day to day you make your mark,  
The way you make the sky seem always blue,  
The light you shine when all ahead seems dark,  
The hope you give when nothing's going right,  
The comfort when life's on a downhill run,  
The courage when the will has taken flight,  
The future when it seems all's said and done,  
The warmth of knowing someone's always there,  
The gentle touch that takes away the pain,  
The confidence that comes with constant care,  
The will to make a rainbow in the rain.  
The happiness that simply knowing brings -  
I've got an angel waiting in the wings.

Terry Donovan

# My Sunflower

It grewed and it grewed  
And nobody knowed  
If it was ever going to stop,  
One day it was half way up the fence,  
The next it was over the top.

It got taller than me  
Then taller than mum  
And soon it was taller than dad,  
It went ever so high,  
Right into the sky  
And still it kept growing like mad.

I went back to school  
And the days got quite cool  
But its growing days, they weren't yet done,  
When I came home each day,  
It was further away  
From me - but nearer the sun.

And it hasn't stopped yet,  
It's much taller I bet  
Than anything you ever saw,  
And I think that it might  
End up right out of sight,  
Disappear, if it grows any more.

Terry Donovan

# My Thoughts Are With You

At times it seems that no one cares  
And life's a long climb up steep stairs.  
You have no leisure, time to pause,  
No moments that are only yours,  
No time to meditate or dream,  
To lock your doors and let of steam.  
Others need you, unaware  
That of yourself you should take care.  
You get the call, you have to run,  
No time to think of number one.

I'd like to help. What can I do?  
I'll say a prayer with love for you  
And hope that someone somewhere sees  
You have a problem they can ease.

Terry Donovan

# Mysterious Ways

God made the tree  
That made the wood  
That made the fabled cross,  
A God-made man-made  
Instrument.  
Another human loss.

God made the man  
That gave the nod  
That had him  
Crucified.  
A mother's son  
Nailed up to die.  
It wasn't God that cried.

And then he had him  
Rise again.  
What was this all about?  
And was it only  
Thomas who's  
Belief was turned to doubt?

God made the world  
And then made man,  
He sent his only son,  
But took him back  
When things went wrong  
And left the job half done.

Terry Donovan

# Naughty Poem

I went into the chemists,  
I was young and very shy.  
He asked me what I wanted;  
Couldn't look him in the eye.

I beckoned him much closer  
So that no-one else could hear,  
And, shuffling feet and awkward,  
I whispered in his ear.

Well, the answer that he gave me  
It shook me to the roots  
And I thought I'd heard it all because  
He said, 'I think you should try Boots'.

Terry Donovan

# Neutral Night

In the slack, black, laid back late of night when daytime hibernates,  
Flowers close, all creatures doze and nature ruminates.

Coiled in corners cats curl up and dream of cream and fish  
Pups and dogs lay still as logs and smell tomorrow's dish.

Tiny tots and kids in cots and weary working men  
Snugly snore behind closed door while dewdrops glaze the glen.

Coupled couples acquiesce in quiet quilted bliss,  
Romeos whose daily woes are cancelled with a kiss.

Grans and grandads, denture free and rheumatism rid,  
Have counted sheep and now they sleep in wrinkled rhythm hid.

The breeze in trees and babbling brook are all that move out there,  
Passing through to fields anew, of time all unaware

And angels making night-time calls invisibly invade  
To do their rounds with silent sounds on harps in heaven played.

And West and East both man and beast coordinated lay.  
The world's at peace but peace will cease when breaks another day.

Terry Donovan

# Never To Forget

'Don't put flowers on my grave each day  
Or cry into your pillow every night.  
Just think of me when I am gone away  
And know that where I am I'll be all right.

And even though I won't be there with you,  
Enjoy your freedom, mingle with the crowd.  
Do all those things you've always wanted to,  
Do all those things you know would make me proud.

You'll never have to prove your love for me,  
And such a love will never ever end.  
Just treat me as a precious memory  
To spend some time with when you need a friend.'

He knew he had no future now and yet  
Those words he vowed he never would forget.

Terry Donovan



# Never Trust A Lobster

Never trust a lobster,  
He may have a charming smile  
But underneath he's ruthless  
And saves everything to file.

The sea and sand and sunshine  
Will have you feeling good  
And trusting everybody -  
But are you sure you should?

Prawns and shrimps keep secrets,  
Mermaids never tell  
But lobsters love to gossip  
(And they make things up as well) .

Crabs give you sidewise glances  
And might seem quite aloof  
But you can trust them at a pinch,  
They very seldom goof

But never trust a lobster.  
I did - now look at me  
In Davy Jones's locker  
At the bottom of the sea.

---

Terry Donovan

## New Lines

They sold haikus at the market,  
Two pounds each or three for five,  
(They'd been freshly picked that morning  
But were barely still alive) .

And little pots of haiku food  
With each they gave away  
With instructions for beginners,  
Two small ladders and a tray.

They were selling them like hot cakes  
(How the hot cake sellers moaned) ,  
People kept on turning up  
Who'd obviously been phoned.

Luckily I got in first  
And so I had the pick,  
I turned them over one by one  
With a winkle-picker's stick.

A line stretched out behind me  
And people from the Pru  
Had popped out on their tea break  
To join the haiku queue.

I paid the man and passed along  
To the fellow selling foam  
And bought a pair of pelicans  
That match my garden gnome.

Terry Donovan

# New Towns

Concrete fuzziwigs,  
Landmarks for the daft,  
Melancholy moo cows,  
Ducks before and aft,

Came the mighty motorway,  
Came the common car,  
Open University,  
Cantilevered bra.

McDonalds in defiance  
Of every well-known fact,  
CCTV just in case  
Some pensioner gets whacked.

Multi-storey parking lots,  
Chunky-tyred jeeps,  
Pavement-spanning pushchairs,  
Manic mobile bleeps.

Centrifugal one-way streets,  
Seven days of seven,  
Filled with those whose destiny  
Is shopping-trolley heaven.

Terry Donovan

# No More Grapes

Our Robert drowned  
In a sea of buttercups  
And we will never know.  
Was it an accident?  
Did he chose that way to go?  
We knew he had his troubles and his strife  
But thought he'd cut their tails off  
With a carving in knife.  
He'd served his time,  
Paid for his crime  
So many different ways,  
Had helped dig up the skeletons  
And modified the maze,  
But in his greyscale later-life,  
When he had seen the light,  
He counted stars and spoke to them  
Like strangers in the night.  
We filled the roads like frogs and toads,  
Removed our hats and bowed.  
Now Robert's pushing daisies up  
Far from the madding crowd.

Terry Donovan

## Not In A Sonnet?

He turned to her and gently held her tight,  
She snuggled up and in his arms resigned.  
Enlivened by the passion of the night  
And with one thought their bodies intertwined.  
He traced her firm young outline one more time  
But, as each time, encountered pastures new,  
He started off the rhythm, she the rhyme  
And slow but sure the integration grew.  
She gave her all, accepted all he gave,  
And, anchored like a ship upon the sea,  
They floated but they rose with every wave.  
Their bodies fixed, their feelings floated free.  
When morning dawned, they lay there for a while,  
Remembering. Two pensioners. One smile.

Terry Donovan

# Now Go To Sleep, My Little One

The sun's gone down, the day is done,  
Now go to sleep, my little one.

All good things must end a while,  
The breath of sleep must hide your smile.  
Your sparkling eyes must close and rest,  
The land of dreams must be your guest.

The sun, while shining bright all day,  
Must to the silver moon give way  
And have his beauty sleep as well,  
And in the morning you will tell

He's bright and chirpy in the sky,  
A new-found twinkle in his eye,  
All set to brighten up the day  
And keep those nasty clouds at bay.

And you will, too, when morning's here,  
Be full of bubbles, full of cheer,  
Refreshed and walking with a spring,  
You'll want to laugh and play and sing.

Now I must tip-toe from your side  
And let the angels be your guide.  
They heard you whisper your late prayer  
And now you're safely in their care.

We've had some laughs, we've had some fun,  
Now go to sleep, my little one.

Terry Donovan

# Oh Dear!

I followed the trail of blood,  
Dark red on the paving spilt,  
Half-crown size blobs  
Of rusty red,  
Freshly bled  
In quantities of death.  
Followed the trail  
And knew  
That in a few  
More paces  
I would find a corpse.  
I followed  
But stopped  
When I looked  
Round to see  
The trail of blood  
Was in fact  
Following me.

Terry Donovan

# Oh What A Fumble!

Oh what a fumble we had.  
I thought she might get mad  
But she thought it was fun  
And when we had done  
She did seem exceedingly glad.

Terry Donovan



# Old Mother Hubbard

Old Mother Hubbard  
Went to the windmill  
To see her daughter, Nancy.  
When she got there,  
Her daughter was bare -  
Just fancy!

Terry Donovan

# On The Outside Looking In

I'm on the outside looking in again  
And hearing laughter from a happy throng,  
I'm peering through a steamed-up window pane.  
I'm looking in from out where I belong.  
And all I see is muffled shapes in pairs,  
The strains of music reach my useless ears,  
I try to spy inside this world of theirs  
Through steamed-up glass and reminiscent tears.  
I turn in sorrow, hollow through and through,  
I've looked at heaven, now I'm back in hell,  
Recalled the happiness that I once knew  
When I was on the inside once as well.  
I hear their laughter - never hear their jokes -  
What solitude their happiness evokes!

Terry Donovan

# One-Way Love

I never thought that knowing you  
And loving you the way I do  
Would be enough to satisfy.  
But I will love you til I die.

I couldn't see my life unfold  
With such an earnest love untold  
And unmatched by the love I crave.  
But I shall love you from my grave.

Though I could never win your heart,  
You'll always be a major part  
of every coming breaking dawn.  
My heart will fly while others mourn.

And when my body and my soul  
Separate to find their goal,  
My heart will like an eagle soar  
On wings of love for ever more.

Terry Donovan

# Only Words

You know I love you but you don't know why,  
You read my verse and words are all you see,  
For all we have in common is the sky.  
You read my words but are you reading me?  
And have you never seen between the lines,  
Where words alone could never reach the mark,  
Where silence with true sentiment combines  
And thoughts stand out like moonbeams in the dark?  
While daffodils are yellow, roses red.  
Love has no colour, has no outward form,  
Love can't be seen but only felt instead.  
Mere words are cold but what they say is warm.  
But warmth is finite, very quickly dies  
When left outside, untouched by blinkered eyes.

Terry Donovan

# Oxfam Shop

The Oxfam Shop book section  
Had the usual array,  
Ancient road maps, Jeffrey Archer,  
Three copies of the Guinness Book of Records  
The Idiot's Guide to Windows 95  
And lots of copies of those little green books  
Which the Jehova's Witnesses give away.  
Cook-books in abundance,  
Mills & Boom galore  
Shelves of forgettable fiction,  
One-time best-sellers and a few old Penguins  
Like Lady Chatterly's Love and Nineteen-Eighty-Four.  
Two Spanish-English Dictionaries,  
A Ford Anglia owner's manual,  
A blood-stained DIY book  
And - of course - The Rose Growers' Annual.  
But, as ever, tucked away, unobtrusive and thin,  
Overlooked by everyone like a plain biscuit in an assorted-biscuit tin,  
I came across at last  
A little book of poetry, a school book from the past.

And I bought it.

Terry Donovan

## Oxford

It was a Sunday evening, he was dressed in his best rags,  
He'd been searching for dropped coins and half-smoked fags  
When he reached the late-night café with great envy he looked in  
And he watched the people munching while he rummaged through the bin.  
Chips and chops and chunks of cheese were being put away  
And he hadn't had a sausage for the best part of the day  
And he stared at one young fellow with a plate of pie and mash.  
He was a bum, he wanted some, but he hadn't got the cash.

Terry Donovan

# Peace

One day the world will be a place of peace,  
Tranquility and calm will fill the air,  
Hostilities, mistrust and global greed will cease  
And none will be the rulers anywhere.

No bombs will drop to shatter land and life,  
No tanks will trample frontiers anew,  
No children growing knowing only strife,  
No discontent to satisfy the few.

No troops will stamp their politicians' feet  
While dying for they're never quite sure what  
Where battlefields were once a quiet street  
Until excuses satisfied the plot.

The elements will live but won't know why  
One day when there is no-one left to die.

Terry Donovan

# Pomp And Circumstance

The concert on the radio  
Was The Last Night of The Proms  
When she came gliding in the room  
And showed me her pom-poms.

Her negligée was flimsy  
And I did a double-take  
While the choir sang 'Jerusalem'  
(With words by William Blake) .

She really did look radiant  
her movements were capricious  
And really quite provocative,  
Though not at all malicious.

I rose and took her in my arms.  
The rest is quite a story,  
While on the radio they sang  
'Land of Hope and Glory'.

Terry Donovan



# Potty!

Mary Adder, little lamb,  
Kissed the boys and made them cry.  
All the king's horses and all the king's men  
Said what a good boy am I!

Terry Donovan

# Quandary

QUANDRY

She sat upon a rock and had a cry  
While tiny wavelets slithered round her feet,  
The sun descended in the silent sky.  
Its dying embers made her day complete.

A happy ending this - or was it sad?  
She knew the day would come and come it did.  
But how can things be good when they're so bad?  
She didn't to the right thing - yet she did.

For long enough the hands of time stood still,  
Tomorrow was at very best a dream.  
There was no future, no way, nor no will;  
No certainty and certainly no scheme.

Yet somehow something in the guise of fate  
Stepped in and wound things up. Too soon. Too late.

Terry Donovan

# Remote Controls And Things Electric, Etc.

I've got one to turn the tv on

And one for the radio too;  
All I need to complete the set  
Is one to turn on you.

There's a microwave in the kitchen  
Which warms things up in a trice;  
If I could press a button  
And warm up you, how nice!

Why do you keep your distance,  
Destroying my heart and soul?  
Why are you always so remote  
And out of my control?

There's a barbecue in the garden  
Which heats food with a handful of coke;  
I wish that I could heat you up  
With just the occasional poke.

There's a kettle on the gas stove,  
With a flick I light its flame;  
Why can't I do the same to you?  
It really is a shame.

Why don't you give your love to me?  
I know I cannot boast a  
Life of wealth and luxury  
But I've got a pop-up toaster.

I keep the winter chills away  
With an oil-filled radiator;  
I have it up against the wall  
But with you it would be much greater.

Yes, I've got all the latest gadgets,  
Everything is hi-tech,  
But I'd swap them all for you, Dear  
(Except my record deck) .

I'd give up my electric blanket  
If you would take its place  
And you could share my 'teas-maid'  
If you made this your base.

If only you would come to me,  
My empty arms to fill,  
You'd take away my loneliness -  
And halve my electricity bill.

Terry Donovan

## Saturday Sunday Sonnet

Next Saturday, Sunday, today and tomorrow  
Our paths may cross then go different ways,  
Moments of gladness and moments of sorrow,  
Alternative feelings on alternate days.  
One day a rainbow and clouds silver-lined,  
The next, angry skies, grey and sad,  
Two lonely hearts for a moment entwined  
Looking forward to what we once had.  
The sun in the heavens will sink to a low,  
A blue moon ascend in its place  
And short, bitter-sweet the sensations we'll know  
As the depth of the future we'll face.  
In a week we will weaken, forgive and forget  
Then wait for another to purge our regret.

Terry Donovan

# Sausages

The day the bomb fell on the house  
The kids were all at school,  
Dad was in his allotment,  
Mum was out buying wool.

The house was completely demolished,  
There was not much remaining at all  
Apart from a section of landing  
And a bike upside-down in the hall.

The cat was trapped under the table,  
The canary was plastered with grit,  
Granny was blackened from head to toe  
And looked like she'd been down the pit.

The outside toilet was now indoors  
With its chain still intact, but no pan.  
He thought that he would get the blame, so  
The dog grabbed the sausages and ran.

Terry Donovan

# Seascape

Raindrops, tears from heaven,  
Fell as if they knew.  
Against a sky of turmoil  
A lonesome seagull flew.  
The lazy tide crept slowly in  
As if it didn't care.  
I looked unto the distance  
The horizon wasn't there.  
But just a misty distance,  
An endless friendless haze,  
A vision of the future,  
Of endless friendless days.  
The sinking sand beneath my feet  
A carpet laid for me.  
The lonesome seagull circled  
As I walked towards the sea.

Terry Donovan

## Short Thought

I've just been out on one my walks  
And was thinking about dandelion stalks!

When I was young they were always tall  
These days they're very very small.

They used to be nine inches or more,  
Now, the flowers are on the floor.

They're really clever. I'm surprised.  
All on their own they've realised

That if they're up there tall and thin,  
Along comes the mower - and Goodnight, Berlin!

But if they're right down low and small  
The mower won't get them at all.

The blades are set for a certain height  
And the dandelions are doing alright,

They still look nice, my favourite flower  
And it's great they've learned to rule the hour!

Terry Donovan



# Single Dad

Single Dad

The kids grew up without a mum around,  
I had to play a double roll instead;  
I often tripped while travelling strange ground  
But somehow they were clothed and washed and fed!  
Most times they had to go without a lot  
And often made the most of second best,  
But they were satisfied with what they got  
And always held their own among the rest.  
But we were happy - that's a great big yes  
And made it through the shadows as a team;  
We had our failures but we found success,  
We had our nightmares, but we made our dream.  
It all seems very long ago somehow  
And worth it, too - for you should see them now!

Terry Donovan

# Skylight

Moonlit melons,  
Balmy beach,  
Ebbing wavelets,  
Silent speech,  
Short the shadows,  
Soft the sand,  
Tender torsos,  
Sea breeze-fanned,  
Hid horizon  
Fades afar,  
Twinkle, twinkle,  
Little star.

Terry Donovan

# Sleep Tight, Fair Maid

Sleep tight, fair maid, forget the world and rest,  
The time to put the day behind is now.  
Let moonbeams dance upon your troubled breast  
And angels smooth the furrows from your brow.  
Be still, for sleep will cast away your cares,  
To vanish like the shadows on your mind,  
Your angels stay to make your worries theirs,  
Your tangled woes to fathom and unwind.  
Another day will dawn, another sky  
Will bring grey clouds as sure as morning dew,  
But when the sleep has left your inner eye,  
You'll see beyond, you'll see a distant blue.  
Now dream the dream, the mundane world postpone.  
Sleep tight, the night belongs to you alone.

Terry Donovan

# Smart

They bought a big red motorbike,  
Italian and quite dear  
And had it fitted at the shop  
With colour-matching gear.

They then bought matching helmets  
And two one-piece leather suits.  
Everything was bought to match,  
Including gloves and boots.

They kept it in a lock-up shed  
And cleaned it once a week.  
But sometimes stood it on the path  
To let folk have a peek.

The first time that they took it out  
Turned out to be their last.  
Not only was it beautiful  
But it was very fast.

The paramedics stood and stared  
And sadness filled each heart.  
They and the bike lay in a heap -  
And didn't they look smart!

Terry Donovan

# Sonnets In The Night

They used to share their poetry at night  
And work together with a common muse,  
Their inspiration in the pale moonlight  
Producing words and lines to interfuse.  
And when the muse was really working with 'em,  
Two minds together with a common thought,  
They very quickly got into the rhythm  
That satisfied the symphony they sought.  
They pooled resources underneath the stars,  
Would finish off one line and start the next,  
And as they synchronised their lah-deh-dahs,  
They turned their tender touches into text.  
And once they'd got their sonnet in the bag,  
Fulfilled, they'd sit and have a well-earned fag.

Terry Donovan

## Sort Of Love Sonnet

I don't think I love you or you love me  
The way that Romeo loved Juliet  
But even so I know that I would be  
A loser if we'd never ever met.  
It makes me happy simply knowing you,  
It gives me comfort knowing that you care,  
I love a friendship that is strong and true  
To know I've got a bosom pal somewhere.  
You make me happy on a grumpy day,  
You make me know that life is not all bad.  
You are the blue that's peeping through the grey.  
You are the best friend I have ever had.  
My life is good because I know you're there.  
And something more than love is in the air.

Terry Donovan

# Suicide By Jelly

He filled a washing-up bowl  
With jelly mould  
And water from a jug,  
Put in his feet.  
The mix complete,  
And gave a little shrug.

He had one last look  
At his favourite book -  
Shakespeare's play, Macbeth -  
Then closed his eyes,  
Met his demise  
By wobbling himself to death.

Terry Donovan

## Summer Holiday Sonnet

The only sound, the traffic passing by,  
A six-foot fence, the view from where I sit,  
To gaze at vapour trails high in the sky,  
Some flowers and a rock'ry - that's it.  
The brightest colours, washing on the line,  
The only scent is diesel from a bus,  
But time to rest and contemplate is mine  
Far from the daily hustle and the fuss.  
A cup of tea fetched out from time to time,  
A smile and chat to chase the blues away,  
A crossword puzzle or a book of rhyme -  
What better way to use the passing day?  
Who needs the beach, the ocean or the bar?  
It's summer if you're happy where you are.

Terry Donovan



## Sweet Sorrow

You look as though you're in a restful sleep,  
Serene, content and in a world of dreams.  
And I don't know if I should smile or weep  
For death should be much sadder than it seems.  
I don't know if you know that you have gone  
I only know to me that you're still here  
And life has left yet somehow life lives on.  
Behind those eyelids are there signs of cheer?  
And has your spirit gone where spirits go,  
To where you always knew that it would end  
But left you with a smile so we will know  
We've lost a body, haven't lost a friend?  
And do you see a rainbow from on high  
While I smile through the tears that I must cry?

Terry Donovan

# Take My Hand

Come, take my hand and let us walk awhile,  
Away from all the hustle-bustle here,  
Let's talk and walk a quiet country mile  
To where the air and what we think is clear.  
Let's talk about the past we might have had,  
The future that is never going to be  
And for a magic moment let's be glad  
There's still a little world for you and me.  
Let's talk about the future that we'll miss  
And speculate on how it might have been  
And seal our sorrow with a saying kiss  
Where autumn takes away the summer's green.  
There is no past, a future we're denied,  
So let's enjoy the present side by side.

Terry Donovan

# The Agony Of Survival

## THE AGONY OF SURVIVAL

I dragged a badly injured leg  
Across the desert's burning sand,  
My throat was parched, my skin on fire,  
The only shade, my hand.

Half blinded, walking know not where  
In circle or straight line,  
Peering through the yellow hell  
To see a single sign.

Vultures circled overhead,  
Leered like the reaper's hawks.  
I couldn't see but I could hear  
The sound of knives and forks.

I dragged the leg, left lines of blood,  
Some unfleshed bone exposed  
And gazed into infinity  
With eyelids blister-closed.

And on the trek, bereft of hope,  
Disheartened was to find  
The horrors faced belittled so  
The horrors left behind.

And on I dragged that damaged leg,  
Was that for auld lang syne?  
It must have been. That bloody leg,  
It wasn't even mine.

Terry Donovan

# The Bare Facts

Last summer in a nudist camp we met.  
I watched her playing tennis with her mate  
And when she won and jumped and cleared the net  
I couldn't help but think that she looked great.  
I thought that I would have a friendly chat  
And stood and waited till her mate had gone,  
I told her she looked lovely and said that  
I'd like a date when she had nothing on.  
She said ok and we met after tea,  
We walked around the gardens hand-in-hand,  
Then we should meet again we did agree.  
It wasn't only just a one-night stand.  
It's been a year and we get on o.k.  
And see each other every single day.

Terry Donovan

# The Clown

He made the children laugh and made them cheer,  
The silly things he did were so much fun.  
Then he would wave and quickly disappear  
When it was over and his turn was done.  
He'd go back to his lonely caravan,  
He'd kiss her photo as he did each day,  
No longer clown but just a hurting man,  
He'd wet a cloth and wipe that smile away.  
He made them laugh but didn't laugh himself  
As he had done when she was by his side.  
He still kept her belongings on the shelf,  
Reminding him of when she was his bride.

Remembering how she had made him feel.  
He smiled again - and this time it was real.

Terry Donovan

# The Empty Boxes

Turn left at the lighthouse  
And follow the coast inland  
Past deserted villages  
That used to be so grand.

Past the little ramshack café  
Where the Vikings stopped for tea  
Past the fallen arches  
And the sheriff's favourite tree.

Down into the valley  
On the road of no return  
And there's nothing on the signposts  
Where the wicker houses burn.

By the dried and dried-up river  
Where the cows no longer stray  
And if you see a mushroom farm  
Where children used to play

You're nearly there already  
Though you're never really far  
From where the clock says ten past two  
And the empty boxes are.

Terry Donovan

# The End Of The World

The end of the world came totally unexpectedly  
And very quickly  
(Only took just over 2000 years) .

Mrs Green was doing her usual thing  
With potatoes, peas and a saucepan  
While her husband was putting the clocks back.

There was no warning;  
No flashes,  
No big bang,  
No last-minute telephone call.

Just an immense blanket of nothingness.

The last flower dropped its head.  
Shrivelled up  
And died.

And that was it.

I only know  
Because I was that soldier.

Terry Donovan

# The Gift Of Love

I stood outside the manger looking in  
But didn't enter, didn't share the joy  
For I had lived a life of practiced sin  
And who would want me near their new-born boy?  
And neither had I anything to give,  
No clothes, no lamb, no coins did I possess  
For I lived like all other urchins live,  
Had nothing that was likely to impress.  
But Joseph saw me there and called me through  
And hand-on-shoulder took me to the child.  
I felt the biggest thrill I ever knew  
When baby Jesus looked at me and smiled.  
And that was when my spirits got a lift -  
Discovering that love can be a gift

Terry Donovan



# The Half-Open Door

R

I stand before  
A half-open door.

Should I enter or not?

I think I will be welcomed  
Or it wouldn't be ajar  
But if I push it further  
Would that be a step too far?

Enter, wait or turn and go?  
What should I do?  
How can I know?

Whatever I do it could be wrong  
But then it could be right  
Or should I just do nothing  
And hope for an invite?

Why don't we get instructions?  
Why isn't there a guide?

Why isn't that door firmly shut  
Or if not - open wide?

Terry Donovan

# The Last Goodbye

I looked at my wife, my wife looked at me,  
We both looked at the nurse  
Who spoke to us with tear-filled eyes:  
'Her condition is getting worse'.

'We've done all that is possible  
To try and save the day  
But our best wasn't good enough -  
Now we can only pray'.

And so we prayed - what else to do?  
And I was far from sure.  
I spoke to God more earnestly  
Than I'd ever done before.

The God that I'd rejected  
And I only hoped somehow  
That he would overlook my past  
And listen to me now.

We stayed with her till morning came.  
The doctor said, 'It's best  
For everyone right now  
If you go home and rest'.

We kissed her thin and sallow cheek,  
We spoke, but no reply.  
A question hovered in the air -  
Was this our last goodbye?

For her, tomorrow never came.  
But we prayed once again,  
Sad but glad that God had heard  
And rid her off her pain.

He's taken her to heaven,  
He's taught us to be brave  
And smile with pride when daily we  
Put flowers on her grave.

Terry Donovan

# The Little Choir Boy

Each Sunday I would go to church.  
I found it hard to pray,  
I'd sit and wonder why the Lord  
Had taken him away.

I'd hear them singing loud in praise,  
Their faces lit with joy,  
But only saw the vacant space  
Once filled by my young boy.

And then one Sunday, somebody  
Said softly in my ear,  
'I know that you can't see him  
But your little boy is here'.

I wasn't shocked, I didn't scorn,  
Surprised I was, but knew  
Those words had come from heaven  
And that, somehow, they were true

And as I listened and I looked  
At that so vacant space,  
A shaft of light brought into sight  
A so familiar face.

I thanked the Lord, how could I think  
A soul he could destroy?  
Each Sunday now I go to church  
And see my choir boy.

Terry Donovan

# The Lonely Dandelion

He stands there in the middle of the lawn  
A splash of colour in a sea of green  
An introduction to the breaking dawn  
The brightest sight from all round to be seen.  
A yellow circle like the very sun  
A friendly warmth emitting from his glow  
A stalwart flower yet a lonely one  
In one-off isolation does he grow.  
One of many he would rather be  
With fellow yellow buddies all around  
Though all the rest are now but history  
Hacked with incompassion to the ground.  
He'll follow them ere long with all due speed.  
To those who rule the roost he's just a weed.

Terry Donovan

# The Mortal Storm

In black and white  
The blood is just as real  
And cold the steel  
And heroes just as brave.  
With every wave  
Comes added fear.  
We strike Swan Vestas,  
Sing a hymn,  
We watch them out,  
We count them in,  
We count the lost,  
We count the cost.  
We guard our own  
And point the gun  
To shoot some other  
mother's son.  
The faceless foe  
We'll never know.  
Brothers in peace  
But not in war  
And do we know  
What we fight for?  
Self-defence we justify  
Without the time to wonder why.  
And do we care?  
The credits roll,  
Indifferent, we homeward stroll.

Terry Donovan

# The Shifting Sand

Ever since you went away,  
last thing at night I lie and pray,  
And think of you somewhere afar  
And ask the angels how you are.

The angels tell me you're ok,  
You dance and sing and love to play  
And do those things for all you're worth  
That, crippled, you missed out on earth.

They tell me your new life is bliss  
The only thing your really miss,  
Where you so happy sat and played -  
The sandpit that your daddy made.

So every night they bring you back  
When we're asleep and all is black  
And let you play there for a while.  
They love to see your lit-up smile.

And so one night while others slept,  
Into the small back yard I crept,  
Kept silent vigil that I may  
Just once more see you there at play.

But nothing happened, no-one came,  
Just disappointment, such a shame.  
I'd hope for just a little sign,  
But your world is apart from mine.

Though something made me stand and stare  
And no, I didn't see you there.  
But how the angels understand.....  
They let me see the shifting sand!

Terry Donovan

# The Spirit Moves

We stand in silent mystery  
And wonder, will the sent one see  
The one whom he is meant to find,  
The one whose presence is divined?

We look along the shuffling rows  
We seek a sign of one who knows  
A secret signal semaphored  
To ape the workings of the Lord,

To stigmatise the chosen child  
For whom the touch is reconciled.  
We feel the shadows point to he  
Who on this night the light will see.

Our hopes, our fears they intertwine.  
Anonymous we stand in line  
In fear we petrify, yet hope  
The scanning eye has us in scope.

The spirit moves - a common cry  
(Please, God, don't have it pass me by;  
Mistaken, yes, my back I've turned,  
Not known the knowledge I have learned.)

You're getting warm - the cry of friends.  
The spirit stops, a hand descends;  
The serpent silent salient stick.  
Was this another party trick?

Terry Donovan



# The Still Of The Night

In the still of night  
I turn out the light  
And always say a quick prayer.  
I don't know who to  
It's just something I do  
In case there's somebody there.

And I've hoped through the years  
There's someone who hears  
But often had reason to doubt  
Though I live in the hope  
That they'll throw me a rope  
When I'm down and I need pulling out.

And I think when I do  
Of friends old and new  
And give them a mention as well,  
So, if 'they' keep a book,  
When they have a quick look  
Whoever's in need they can tell.

In the still of last night  
I turned out the light  
And went through my usual tryst  
And before I was through  
I told them that you  
Should be right at the top of the list.

Terry Donovan

# The Truth Doesn'T Hurt

I know, my love, another holds you tight.  
I know, my love, that you're where you belong.  
And even through my long and sleepless nights,  
I know my love what's right. I know what's wrong.  
I love you as I've never loved before.  
When I met you a brand new life began.  
But I must hide my love forever more.  
I'd never want to be the 'other man'.  
I know you'll think of me from time to time,  
And in our dreams we a have a meeting place  
Where what we do will never be a crime,  
Where will not say sorry, just say grace.  
So please don't change. Just stay the way you are,  
While I love you in secret from afar.

Terry Donovan

# The Verdict

'Not guilty', said the judge, 'You're free to go',  
A verdict which to Paddy was a shock  
And how the jury reached it didn't know.  
He stood there disbelieving in the dock.  
The court was cleared and eve'ry one filed out,  
The ending of a most successful day,  
His friends stood loudly smiling all about,  
The press had put their pens and pads away.  
And as the judge was shuffling out of sight,  
Paddy called 'I've one more question, please! '  
The judge replied that that would be all right  
While ever'rybody else just seemed to freeze.  
'Just tell me, when away from court I dash -  
Does the verdict mean that I can keep the cash? '

Terry Donovan

# The Wanderer

He wandered through untrodden hills  
Beneath unclouded skies;  
Although he walked on leaden feet,  
He dreamed of paradise.

And, casting off his recent past,  
He vied to be alone -  
Just him and Mother Nature  
(And, of course, his mobile phone) .

As evening fell and shadows grew,  
He wistfully did roam;  
Then when he'd had enough of that,  
He got a taxi home.

Terry Donovan

# The Way It Was

I listened to you sing our fav'rite song  
And heard the children's laughter from outside  
Those sounds that I'd not heard for oh so long.  
I listened and I smiled and then I cried.  
Music to my ears and to my heart  
Memories so readily restored,  
From which I never should have been apart,  
Sounds which I should never have ignored.  
The years rolled back to long-gone happy days,  
And while I listened time was standing still,  
I saw the world as one big happy haze,  
Nostalgic'ly I shuddered from the thrill.  
The music stopped replaced by empty pain  
Until I played the cassette once again.

Terry Donovan

# The Wonder Of You

The Wonder Of You

The wonder of you  
Is the way you go through  
Life with a smile on your face.  
Though you must have your cares,  
You help others with theirs  
And you put yourself in second place.

The wonder of you  
Is the way that you do  
Everything right from the heart  
And you seek no reward  
And get little applaud,  
Content with just playing your part.

The wonder of you  
Is a love strong and true  
That has made you an angel on earth.  
Which you so freely give  
So that others may live  
Their own lives for all they are worth.

The wonder of you  
Is you're not someone who  
Would ever stand out in a crowd,  
But wherever you go  
There'll be someone who'll know  
The wonder that you've been endowed.

Terry Donovan

# Think Of Me

Please think of me and I will think of you  
Then we can get together in our dreams,  
Imaginations recreate the view  
Of everything as proper as it seems.  
Where walls don't stand and fences are not built,  
Horizons just a backcloth yet to fall,  
No crying to be heard when milk is spilt  
And only nature answers to the call.  
We'll dream the dream, perhaps a dream too far,  
Beyond all possibilities of reach,  
But better searching for a shooting star  
Than learning all the trodden ground can teach.  
Yes, we can think and blink away the tears  
And in a moment glean those wasted years.

Terry Donovan

# This Year

He's living in a caravan these days  
Because he hasn't got a proper house.  
It was burnt to cinders in the blaze  
Along with his pet hamster and his mouse,

He doesn't earn a living like he did,  
The firm went bust and everything closed down,  
He owes a lot cos into debt he slid  
And now he signs on weekly in the town.

His girlfriend left him for another chap  
And there has been no other in his life,  
He tried in vain to sort of fill the gap  
But even Ebay couldn't find a wife.

Now he sits thinking of all that has passed -  
so he hopes this year is better than the last

Terry Donovan



# Thoughts In A Cubicle

I know they're all the fashion  
And they're worn by Britney Spears,  
But you and her are different  
Both in size and, sadly, years.

On her, they make men ogle  
And fill them with desire.  
On you, they'd make men double-take  
Then shiver, not perspire.

I wouldn't say you're past it. No,  
You've still got what it takes,  
But even so, that shouldn't show.  
Too much, for heavens' sake.

They're ok with a slender waist,  
But not with bits that sag.  
You look just like a pound of fudge  
Stuffed in a half- pound bag.

No this won't do, they're just not you.  
At least you had a try.  
So get them off and just be glad  
The mirror doesn't lie.

/TCD

Terry Donovan

# To Heather

Slither hither, Heather  
I want you by my side.  
Through the moonlit undergrowth  
Together we can slide.  
Cold and wet, we'll cuddle  
But with a love that's hot,  
We'll do some squelchy petting  
In some broken flower pot.  
With wet and soggy kisses  
I will show you how I care,  
Personify my passion  
Blowing bubbles in the air.  
Do you hear me, Heather?  
Do you want to be my mate  
So you and I together  
Can gently lubricate.  
Let us curl up lovingly  
And have a good old time,  
Jellified in tenderness  
And intertwined in slime.  
Slither hither, Heather,  
Let's have a hearty hug.  
With you to share my silver trail,  
I'll be a happy slug.

Terry Donovan

# Today I Cried

Today I cried,  
But no-one knew.  
With none to love  
And friends so few,  
Nobody sees,  
Nobody hears.  
So often in  
My ageing years,  
I have to face  
So much alone,  
Face situations  
On my own.  
So no-one asked  
Or wondered why  
And no-one cared  
That I should cry.  
But cry I did.  
I cried real tears.  
Those onions were  
The strongest  
That I've chopped up  
For many years.

Terry Donovan

# Tomorrow

'I'll do it tomorrow', he said,  
As so many times before  
But the next day he was called up  
And taken off to war.

And so he never did it,  
Their tomorrow never came,  
She doesn't have him any more,  
She only has his name.

She had to ask the man next door,  
Who told her with a sigh,  
'I'll have a look tomorrow'.  
It makes you want to cry.

Terry Donovan

# Train Of Thought

There's a little railway station  
In the countryside near here  
And a little old steam engine  
Stops there just one day each year

With its little wooden carriages,  
Where it comes from no-one knows,  
But I once bought a ticket  
And I do know where it goes.

It was just a one-way ticket  
And it's just a single track,  
It took me somewhere special.  
But it didn't bring me back.

Terry Donovan

## Tv Movies

You see the agony but feel no pain,  
You see the tears but sorrow isn't real.  
Blood flows but goes where make-up artists stain;  
Imagine, yes - but never ever feel.  
Ignore dead bodies if they are the foe  
(Just as the politicians do in war) ,  
Let's cheer the hero going with the flow,  
(While, for effect, they kill a dozen more) .  
All that matters is the story-line,  
Reality is always put on hold;  
When shooting's over eve'rybody's fine  
And someone somewhere scoops a pot of gold.  
It's only entertainment (and it's free  
With breaks so you can have a cup of tea!)

Terry Donovan

## Two Feet Below

He walked the vale of upturned drawing pins,  
Each step a stigma of unanswered sins.  
Ahead, horizons never to be met,  
Behind, reminders never to forget,  
Above, a reject slip from Pearly Pete,  
Below, A sorry soul beneath each feet.

Terry Donovan

# Two Telephones

We're just two telephones away.

I wonder if she'll call today?  
I want to hear her speak and say  
That she is well and all's ok,  
To hear her words come down the line.  
I wonder, is she missing mine?

We're just two telephones apart,  
But will we have a heart-to-heart?  
Be close together for a while?  
Will I get to 'hear' her smile  
And tell me things I need to know?  
I'm sitting, waiting, hoping so.

We're just two telephones afar,  
So many miles between us are  
But when she whispers in my ear,  
The miles evaporate - she's here!  
I hear her voice and spring is springing

I must end now.....

The phone is ringing!

Terry Donovan



# Unforgettable

I watched it wobble in the wind  
While lit up by the moon,  
And thought that I would never see  
Another like it soon.

The tide came in, the tide went out;  
I never will forget -  
It didn't lose its warming glow  
Despite it being wet.

Terry Donovan

# Unhappy Christmas

She sat beside the Christmas tree and cried,  
Unnoticed by the children as they played  
And opened their new presents so wide-eyed  
And acted like all children Christmas-dayed.

The record-player sang a jolly song,  
The nearby cooking turkey smelled yum-yum,  
She'd made the effort, tried to play along  
And tried to be the perfect Christmas mum.

But came the time she had to dropp her mask,  
Admit that on her own she couldn't cope,  
Alone she was unequal to the task  
And at the test admit she'd lost all hope.

The children played and laughed and didn't know  
Until they found her footsteps in the snow.....

Terry Donovan

## Untitled But Mushy

I stand once more beside the silent sea,  
A last look at the sun's last look at me.  
The rusty sky gives way to coming night,  
The sun, now done, slips slowly out of sight.  
But for a moment, everything is still,  
The waves lay flat for they have time to kill,  
The late night sea-gull's back home in his nest,  
The sand and shingles in the twilight rest.  
And with me, nature takes the time to mourn  
For you who'll not be here to see the dawn.  
But unlike them, I know I'll see you soon,  
Amongst the stars that twinkle round the moon.  
The scene will change, the scene will be the same  
And you'll look down once more and know I came.

Terry Donovan

# Untouched By Human Hand

The dandelions, grass and borders wild,  
Thistles, nettles, teasels, golden rod,  
Wild roses, buttercups and mustard mild,  
Bristling bramble, bluebells on the nod.  
Birds and butterflies and busy bees,  
Ants and beetles, centipedes and snails,  
Wiggly worms and ladybirds at ease,  
Baby frogs with springy little knees.  
Moon and dewdrop, breeze and rain,  
All a part of nature's onward plan,  
That God's creations will sustain  
Without the help of man.

Terry Donovan

# Waiting

Tomorrow is too late  
Too soon  
When coming together  
Means parting  
And past futures become reality  
And future pasts  
Confirm.  
It's always shadows.  
And denial.  
Silver linings  
Enshrouded  
In black  
A never-ending tunnel  
Teased by hope  
But always underlined  
By truth.  
Ruthless fingers beckon  
But fear forbids.

Bring on the end.

Terry Donovan

# Walked Away

He couldn't believe what he was seeing.  
He stood and stared in awe.  
Should he laugh or should he cry?  
He leaned against the door.

He loved the smell of Brussel sprouts,  
By far his favourite veg.  
He'd sometimes pinch them off the plate  
Of his step-brother, Reg.

But even so, the die was cast,  
He heard the tree tops sway.  
Not surprising, he looked stunned  
And just.....walked away.

Terry Donovan

# Way To Go

The journey is unnecessary  
But getting there, a must.  
Don't rely on anyone  
But give them all your trust

And if they ask, say nothing,  
But tell them all you know.  
There's only one way forward,  
But that's not the way to go.

For you must take the downhill route,  
Let nothing make you stop.  
Just carry on regardless  
Until you reach the top.

And when you reach your journey's end,  
Your target to achieve,  
You're back to where you started from  
And just about to leave.

The last mile is the longest mile  
If multiplied by two  
And you're burdened down with baggage  
And a case of *deja vu*.

Terry Donovan

# What An Eyeful

The woman next door has no shame  
And when the weather's hot  
Lies in her garden naked  
Showing everything she's got.  
It really shouldn't be allowed,  
She should be brought to book  
Cos even though I try so hard  
I cannot help but look.  
I'm sure it helps to keep her cool  
And tans her nicely too  
But why should all her neighbours  
Have to tolerate that view?  
It may be back to nature  
But it isn't very nice  
And only just this morning  
I fell off my ladder twice.

Terry Donovan



# What If They Weren'T Daffodils?

I wandered lonely as a cloud,  
A little cloud that's bonkers  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of big brown conkers  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
They lay about in twos and threes

Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the milky way,  
They stretched in never-ending line  
I filled my pockets straight away  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance  
And grabbed them while I had the chance,

The waves beside them danced, but they  
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:  
The nicest nuts I'd seen that day  
And I'd been up since half past three  
I gazed - and gazed - but little thought  
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood,  
I hold my conkers by and by  
Which is the bliss of solitude;  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
They're much more fun than daffodils.

Terry Donovan

# What You Need To Get By

To know that someone loves you,  
To know you have a friend,  
To know that there's a pot of gold  
At every rainbow's end.

To know you have a guiding star  
That's watching over you,  
To know that others sympathize  
When you are feeling blue.

To know that those you've loved and lost  
Have found a happy home  
Away from all their worries  
And where only angels roam.

A lot of happy memories  
Of good times from the past,  
And knowing that some things you did  
In others' minds will last.

But most of all to get you by,  
Make life as smooth as silk  
Is a box of Tetley tea bags  
And a good supply of milk.

Terry Donovan

## Who But You

I picture in my mind my ideal girl,  
I picture in my mind the girl for me,  
The sort that ought to set my heart awhirl  
The sort that ought to set my spirits free.  
I make a perfect girl identikit,  
I make a likeness of a pretty face,  
I juggle bits around until they fit,  
I juggle 'til the image falls in place.  
And when I've finished I stand back and look.  
The perfect woman is a sight to see!  
There never was a portrait on a hook  
That lightened up a room so gracefully.  
And best of all, when this process is through,  
The picture that I see is none but you.

Terry Donovan

# Who Heals The Healer?

Who heals the healer?  
Who understands  
That even with her healing hands  
She's only human after all  
And as a human she can fall  
For bugs and bumps and pains and aches  
And as a human make mistakes  
And, busy making others better,  
Forget these things are out to get her.

Through her do powers intercede  
To get to work on those in need,  
Through her they pass to cure so much  
With just her presence and her touch.  
But can't they stop and can't they see  
When she herself is not pain-free?

It somehow seems to be unfair  
That she who gives out so much care  
From sources by whatever name  
Cannot expect to get the same.

We've heard about 'mysterious ways'  
But some things always will amaze,  
And after all the spin is spun,  
Who heals the healer - anyone?

Terry Donovan

# Why

I always talked with my parents  
And with my teacher too,  
Read all the books and magazines  
That tell you what to do.

I then took all precautions,  
Was careful as could be.  
But the baby's due in August -  
So oh why did it happen to me?

Terry Donovan

# Why Does The Sun Do That?

Why does the sun come out  
In a sky of non-stop blue  
And brighten up the afternoon  
While I am feeling blue?

What happened to those big grey clouds,  
That rain that drizzled down  
And made it seem appropriate  
For me to sit and frown?

Why does your old photograph  
Make me want to smile  
While I'm quite happy scowling  
In my oft-adopted style?

Why does that old blackbird  
Sing so gaily in the tree?  
It's making me feel cheerful.  
Why can't it let me be?

Why do the things around me  
Tell me to be glad  
While I have tried so blooming hard  
To sit here feeling sad?

Why do I write a poem  
Full of the joys of life  
When I set out intending  
To write of woes and strife?

Why do I want to make you laugh  
When I could make you cry?  
Cos I feel very happy  
But I'm blown if I know why!

Terry Donovan

# Why Dogs Always Smell Each Others' Bums

Once upon a time I'm told  
When strange things happened in the world of old  
An extraordinary meeting took place  
Of dogs from all round the global face.  
They all met somewhere near the Golan heights  
For a conference on doggy rights.  
It took place in a massive hall  
Cos anything less would be too small.  
As they went in, every dog and pup  
took off its coat and hung it up  
Then when the conference was over  
All the dogs (there were loads called Rover)  
Piled outside in lengthy queues  
And they couldn't sort out whose coat was whose.  
In utter confusion, they all got mixed  
And couldn't get the matter fixed,  
So each grabbed a coat and made for the door,  
Wearing the one which was closest at paw  
And, rather than make an almighty stir  
They all ended up in another's fir.  
Now every time you see dogs meet  
Or even passing in the street.  
You'll see them have a good old smell  
Cos that's the only way they can tell  
If its their coat that the other's got.  
You may believe this tail or not,  
They're only seeking what they treasure  
They don't go sniffing bums for pleasure  
They want their coats whoever's got 'em  
And they can only start at the bottom.  
But if they can't find them, that's too tough -  
Justice in the world of dogs is ruff.

Terry Donovan

# Woe Is Me

If there's only just one trolley  
In a supermarket which  
Has wheels which go all different ways  
And pushes like a bitch,

Then there's only just one customer  
Who gets it every time.  
It's me - and I start using words  
I can't put into rhyme.

I try to push it forward  
And it lurches to the right  
And if I try to compensate,  
It lurches left in spite.

So it ends up at an angle  
With the front end pointing back  
And to get the thing in motion's  
Like line-dancing with a yak.

Everyone goes sailing past,  
Their trolleys piled up high  
And I'm stuck in the gangway  
With just one small shepherd's pie.

I only use a trolley  
Cos I've asthma, sad to say  
And a basket could get heavy  
And fair take my breath away

So I try to make things easy  
With a trolley for support,  
It ought to be quite helpful  
But it's nothing of the sort.

What energy I started with  
Has vanished in thin air,  
The direction that I'm going in  
Is neither here nor there.



And I don't know which way to go,  
I have to wait I find  
Until the b\*\*\*\*y trolley  
Has made up its b\*\*\*\*y mind.

Terry Donovan

# Whoops

He tried to pick it up  
Between his finger and his thumb.  
She yelled and he said 'Sorry -  
I thought it was a crumb.'

Terry Donovan

# Wrong Number

'Is that you? '

I said 'Who? '

She said 'You'

I said 'Me? '

She said 'Yes'

I said ' Well I don't know,

It's me that is true

But when you say you,

Are you just having a guess? '

She said 'Why? '

I said 'Well

I am sure you can tell

That whoever I am, I am me,

But am I the you

You want to talk to,

Whoever that person may be? '

She said 'Oh! I don't know,

I was hoping so,

Your number's the one I've got here'

She was only a child,

I said 'Praps you misdialled'

She said 'Me? '

I said 'Yes'

She said 'Oh'

She was silent and then

I said 'try it again'

She said 'What? '

I said making your call'

And then before long'

'She said oh - I dialled wrong! .

I'm sorry, I do feel a fool'.

I said, being kind,

'That's ok never mind'

She said 'Thanks'

I said 'Fine'

She said 'Well,

I'd better hang up,

I've got a sick pup,

I was phoning the vet, Mr. Bell'.

So she put down the phone.  
I just stood there alone  
And then the darned thing rang once more  
And a voice that I knew  
Said 'Hello is that You? '  
I said 'Who? '  
Cos now I was really unsure.  
She said 'Darling it's me'  
And that filled me with glee,  
I said 'Sweetheart, this is me, too'.  
She said 'I know  
And I do love you so'  
I said 'really?  
Cos I love you too.'  
Then she told me lots more,  
And I just said 'Cor! '  
And so it went on through the night,  
Cos you just can't retire  
With love on the wire  
And I knew she'd got my number right.

Terry Donovan

# Yesterday

Yesterday, when rabbits sniffed the air  
And played their morning games on grassy hills,  
They pranced about with very little care  
And rested underneath the daffodils.  
The cows ignored them while they chewed their cud  
And dropped their pats to dry up in the sun,  
They knew the farmer didn't want their blood -  
Had more important uses for his gun.  
The lull before the storm, on padded feet,  
Crept all across the land, unseen, unheard,  
The farmer's daughter ate her shredded wheat  
And scarecrows stared it out without a word,  
And rugged age-old oak trees stood unbowed.  
Yesterday - before the mushroom cloud.

Terry Donovan

# You Know Who You Are!

I didn't see you when you died,  
I never worried, never cried.  
Like all around, I didn't know  
(Like you did) you were set to go.

I didn't hear them sing and pray  
As you were slowly rolled away,  
I wasn't there to read a rhyme  
Or join in tea-and-biscuits time.

But I was there to talk to you  
Where trees grew tall and bluebells grew.  
We sat together for a while,  
Unwound and made each other smile.

We knew your time on earth was done  
And, scattered where the squirrels run,  
You've just become a memory,  
The same way you remember me.

And are you watching as I write?  
You used to and you still well might.  
I didn't see you when you died.  
That's why you're always at my side.

Terry Donovan

# You What?

The train stopped in the tunnel,  
All the lights went out.  
The people sat in silence.  
You could hear a brussel sprout.

The fat man in the corner  
Broke into a second sweat,  
The woman with the Walkman  
Lit up a cigarette.

The henpecked looking husband  
Turned his mobile on again  
And like that bloke on telly yelled  
"Hi, dear, I'm on the train".

And someone, no one knew just who,  
Then furtively passed wind.  
In the darkness noses wrinkled  
While the boy in glasses grinned.

The fellow with the crossword  
Clicked his ball point pen non-stop,  
The toddler in his mother's arms  
Was getting in a strop.

With the silence getting louder  
Fancied fear become a fact,  
The onset of line fidgeting  
Signed a unifying pact.

No one spoke or broke the silence,  
No one knew quite what to do.  
You don't find many heroes  
On a rush-hour train to Crewe.

Then suddenly the lights came on,  
The engine's whistle screeched,  
The carriage gave a shudder,  
Blood returned to faces bleached.

The tunnel walls moved slowly past  
As wheels began to turn,  
The fat man did his buttons up,  
The toddler did a gurn.

Someone wiped a steamed-up window,  
Everyone stopped feeling grave,  
But only the boy in glasses  
Saw the headless horseman wave.

Terry Donovan



# You'Re Beautiful

You're beautiful in oh so many ways  
And life with you is one long happy dream  
The sun shines always even on dull days  
For summer you will always make it seem.  
You never change, you're such a lovely sight,  
My heart still jumps whene'er you catch my eye,  
All through each day and through each moonlit night.  
You're like an angel fallen from the sky.  
I often wonder how come you are mine?  
You had the choice of any twinkling star -  
It could be luck or something more divine  
But every day I thank the Lord you are.

You're beautiful in oh so many ways  
So just sit there a while and let me gaze.

Terry Donovan