

Poetry Series

John Knight

- poems -

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John Knight (8 September 1933)

Hi All

My name is John Knight I was born in Liverpool - The City of Culture in 1933. We have many fine Poets like Roger McGough and Mucicians like the Beatles and the Liverpool Philharmonic. It was great City to be brought up in. 'Scoucers' are very articulate and we have produced the best comedian in the World - Ken Dodd still going strong at 80! I am a Research Scientist - Biochemistry and a Lecturer. I have three children and eight grandchildren. I am interested in Art, Music, Poetry and Languages and Foreign Travel. I am interetsed in Science Fiction and the Spiritual Dimension.

Works:

Nuffield A Level Science - Food Science (1968) . Mycological Chemistry - PhD Thesis - Nottingham University (1965) . Heart Drugs - ICI Publication for Schools (1968) . A New England Dream (Lulu 2007) . Third Planet from Alturia (SF - Self Published 2008) . America Unzipped - 25 States (Self Published 2002) . America Unwrapped - Another 25 States (Self Published 2008) . A Pigment of my Imagination - Life of Edgar James Knight (Self Published 2006) . Pure as Crystal - Strong as Steel - Life of Stephen James Knight (Self Published 2009) . Dedicated to God and Science - Life of John Arthur Knight (Self Published 2005) . Alaskan Adventure (Self published 2008) . The Baltic Saga (Self Published 2009) .

A Touch of Glass.

One of the most versatile substances on Earth,
Why do we always take glass for granted?
A wine bottle, a pickle jar, a cheap vase,
A window pane, all disposable and recyclable.

The main ingredient is common sea shore sand,
Chemically combined with a little soda or potash.
Heat resistant glass - silica - is just pure sand.
For cut glass, add a little lead, for coloured glass, minerals.

Its greatest property is its sheer transparency,
Transparent because it is not crystalline.
It is in fact a paradox - a solid solution!
Consequently it lets light pass clean through it!

Like so many important scientific discoveries,
Penicillin, gravity, stainless steel, purple dye,
The steam engine, polythene and radioactivity,
Glass was discovered by pure accident!

In antiquity, sand and wood ash, combining
In the embers of a fire to produce shiny jewels.
Homo Sapiens, sifting the jewels and concluding that they
Must be a fusion of wood ash and sand - discovered GLASS!

(John Knight UK - August 2009) .

John Knight

Cerebral Love

This poem is dedicated to Olfa Drid - who explores the beauty of Intellectual Love in many of her Poems. I have incorporated the last two stanzas of 'Is Romantic Love that Necessary' as a denouement to my Poem. Please read and comment. This is a new dimension for me.

The body is bounded by space and time,
Limited to four fixed dimensions.
The activities of physical love are bounded,
By the same four parameters.

Of course the courtesans would argue,
'The permutations are infinite,
Even if you limit it to twosomes
And its popularity has never waned! '

When I told Victoria she had a beautiful mind,
She smiled but did not deny it.
She is a Cambridge double first in Physiology
And Psychology - so it was very apposite.

She explained to me that the Love Zone
In the prefrontal lobe - Brodman's area 9
Actually contains twelve billion connections.
'Room for infinite experimentation then' - I joked!

I was a research student in Biochemistry
So we spent many hours together cerebrally!
The other students suspected us of congress
But our mutual love had no physical dimensions!

It was just as intense when she moved
To Harvard for an Assistant Professorship,
In the field of Human Emotion.
I stayed at Cambridge with Crick & Watson.

What did I learn, from Professor Victoria Montgomery,
About the parameters of intellectual love,
And what did she learn from me?
And how did it compare with physical love?

Well - firstly it requires two well tuned minds.
It also requires mutual consent for cerebral access.
Secondly, because we were not clairvoyants,
Verbal communication, electronic or vis-a vis, is a necessity.

Thirdly, the process of intellectual love
Must never be demeaned by actual physical love.
It must consist solely of mental intercourse
Not an oxymoron of mental and physical.

People often talk glibly of actually being,
On another persons wavelength - of having,

The same vibes - even mistakingly of being mind-lovers.
But in all these cases - these couples are physically active!

I only know that the cerebral love
That Victoria and I share
Is not limited by space or time
And it really blossomed - transatlantically!

Sadly Victoria died in America
The serendipic victim of a light plane crash
The combination of a sense of duty
And an unforeseen atmospheric storm.

Did the sweet intercourse of our minds,
Cease with her death - high in the Apalachians?
Many people have asked me that question,
Especially those who have never experienced cerebral love.

Is there a love story that embraces eternity
Once passion and desire are consumed entirely?
Love lasts forever only when it is postponed and delayed
When passion is suspended and desire is denied.....

(August 18 2009)

John Knight

Desert Island Discs

Music is for me - I told the BBC
The greatest pleasure of my life.
It provides for me - fondest memory,
Of the places I've been, of things I have seen,
Of my family, my children, my wife!

You are allowed just eight records, they say,
To follow your life story through.
Their music revives in your memory,
The site of each place, the shape of each face,
The choice is entirely with you!

One record for every ten years, for me
That made it a difficult choice.
I sifted through my record memory,
The Beatles and Elvis - (with his gyrating pelvis!)
And Tom Jones' incredible voice!

And then there are classics and country
And folk songs and jazz and the blues,
Each genre bringing its memory.
The Liverpool sound, a merry-go-round
How on Earth was I going to choose?

The first song I chose for connection,
To Liverpool, place of my birth,
My Granddaughter sang this selection
And what did it say, it just said 'Yesterday',
A good time for laughter and mirth!

A coice from Tchaikovski was my number two,
'Nutcracker' by Liverpool Phil
My Father a pianist and organist who,
Played it in the night, much to my delight,
Of the classics I sure got my fill!

During the War the sirens begin,
Then music from Gracie and Bing
For this time I chosen, Dame Vera Lynn.
'There'll be blue birds over - the White Cliffs of Dover'
It's a song we were all taught to sing!

In the '50's the greatest was Elvis,
Who transformed the Bing Crosby groan
And sang as he wiggled his pelvis.
Because it is cool, to praise F C Liverpool
My choice - 'You'll never walk alone'.

The guitar's an ins-tru-ment for those who can sing,
for classic for jazz and the blues,
Segovia and Reinhardt and Broonsey and King
They all made each string, with such harmony ring

But its Jango's 'Nuage' I would choose!

From Country Music emotion you get,
Of love and of life and of home,
Great singers like Cash and Tammy Wynette
But it is Jim Reeves - who my vote receives,
'Put your two lips - so close to the phone'!

The music of Wales is by Heaven selected,
In each village - a great Male Voice Choir,
'Myfanwy's' the song that I have elected.
Treorchy Male Voice, makes my heart rejoice,
Their tenors could not sing any higher!

My last song's devoted to my Lady Wife
To leave her 'til last is regrettable,
For her there are so many songs in my life!
But I'll bare my soul and choose Nat King Cole
Who like her is quite 'Unforgettable'!

So with my eight records, I'll travel afar
On my Desert Island I'll stay,
My luxury? A stool and a Spanish guitar,
A Spanish Dictionary is the best book for me
Para aprender las parabras - que yo no se!

When making your choice of each Island Disc
Which you'll take and which you will leave
In making your choice you must take a risk
All living musicians - hang on our decisions
And pray that you'll chose their new mix!

(John Knight - Colchester UK - July 2009)

John Knight

Education - Sonnet

What is School - a place to learn,
Where learning adds on learning,
As each day succeeds the day before?
So daily I become more learn-ed
And what have I learnt?
Language, Literature, Music, Math, Science & Sociology
And what have I understood?
Through language - through math - the mystery and meaning
Of life - of death - of in between.
Life without knowledge is meaningless
Death without understanding is futile!
So what is School - College - University?
A preparation for life - LIFE SKILLS
A preparation for death - DEATH SKILLS!

John Knight

Gilbert & Sullivan

I'm not a classic music snob - my tastes are cosmopolitan
Each music genre has its job - to keep the listener turnin' on.
Jazz, country, classics, rock and roll - I like the rhythm and the lyrics
They stir the music in my soul - they interchange acoustic physics!

The Beatles, Bach and Bacharach - I give each one attention,
Random is arranged my CD rack - critique's not my intention.
But even the most fickle buff - must have a predeliction
A choice form this acoustic stuff - a personal selection.

I must confess what I like best - a perfect combination
Gilbert & Sullivan beats the rest - the music of the Nation!
Its a perfect sublimation - of lyric and of tune
Of costume and gyration - to make the punters swoon!

Compared with Classic Opera- some think it's rather trite,
Sub-class of lepidoptra - ephemeral moths of night.
But a seat at the Mikado - or the Pirates of Penzance
Evokes audience bravado - and makes them sing and dance!

It's the language of the people - it's the paradox of life
It's bells rung from the steeple - and pure internecine strife.
The music fits the lyrics - and the costumes fit the plot
It's G & S, not astrophysics - dull and boring they are not!

Some ncritics say they're all the same - plots, lyrics and the tunes
But facts don't justify the claim - they're different as the sun & moon.
Patience dwell on poets & dragoons - Trial by Jury dwells on love,
Iolanthe plays a lot of lovely fairy tunes - Princess Ida's hand in glove.

Each one deals with issues - the Victorians thought of worth.
Prejudice and tissues - of life and death and noble birth.
The fact I rest my case on - is the fact that in our Schools
Music teachers really love them - and teenagers find them cool!

Comprehensive Schools and Public - Grammar Schools as well
All love the G & S republic - and the stories that they tell.
G & S societies thrive in cities - and they thrive in towns
And they all keep sitting pretty - singing, playing, sewing gowns!

So if you want a holiday - that's full of fun an laughter
Go to Buxton for the feastival - and you'll be hooked thereafter.
Three solid weeks of G & S - Rudigore and the Grand Duke
The Sorcerer and Gondoliers - but don't forget to book!

(Jhn Knight - UK)

John Knight

Half Way to Paradise?

This poem is dedicated to Olfa Drid to encourage her in her very exciting and precious search for spiritual truth.

Life makes such high demands on me each day;
Demands of social intercourse, demands of physical existence,
Demands of mental exercise, demands of spiritual response.
From where comes all the energy to meet this plethora of demand?

I am a child of my environment, shaped by the Ying and Yang of life.
I learn more from my own mistakes, than by the foolishness of others!
I try to grow each day in wisdom and in stature,
In favour with myself, my mates and with my Maker.

Is growth in mind, body and spirit, incremental
Or is each day a tabula rasa, a fresh start without precedent?
I don't think so otherwise:
Each day I'd have to learn to wash and dress.
Each day I'd have to learn to speak and eat.
Each day I'd have to learn to walk and ride.
Each day I'd have to learn to laugh and cry.
The list is endless. How on Earth could I survive?

But where does all his energy come from?
For physical prowess, from food, deep within my freezer.
For mental activity, from neurons, deep within my brain.
For social interaction, from inner resources and my community.
Accumulation of experience of day-by-day activity,
Things learned and then things understood!

So, let me try and philosophise my life's progression.
Is each day easier than the last, but harder than the next?
Does life get better, brighter, more beautiful?
Is life's pathway lighter and less arduous,
Making old age mellifluous fulfilment of my youthful daydreams?
I don't think so have you visited a Retirement Hostel recently?

And finally what about spiritual energy, does that come from within?
Or from without, from some rich cosmic force, which in some way
Supplements the physical, the mental and the social,
And then provides that extra special spark.
That extra spark which makes the mundane special,
Which makes the ugly beautiful, the wornout workable
And every stage much more bearable.

Best of all it promises life after death and immortality.
Imperfection raised to perfection, dishonour to honour,
Weakness to power, natural to spiritual and terrestrial to paradise!

These four coexist - Physical - Mental - Social - Spiritual
But in the last analysis all is reduced to the Spiritual.
This simple faith, this grasping of divinity
Gives strength for all vicissitudes of present life,

Makes all life's little ups-and-downs seem like a passing vapour
Ephemeral comparison to all the Glory that's to follow!

John Knight

I have the Right

This poem is in the form of a VILLANELLE and is dedicated to all Peomhunters who care about the form and structure of their poems!

I have the right to justify my style,
Its ins and outs its wheeling and its deal,
My way of life - my temperament - my smile.

We make our way in life by use of guile,
By how we speak and think and how we feel,
I have the right to justify my style.

I do not wish my customers to rile,
It would offend to lie and cheat and steal,
My way of life - my temperament - my smile.

At work I judge a carpet by its pile,
I always judge a fabric by its feel,
I have the right to justify my style.

I always try to go the extra mile
And show commitment full of fervent zeal,
My way of life - my temperament - my smile.

The Judgement Day will bring my final trial
And though I do not want my fate to seal,
I have the right to justify my style,
My way of life - my temperament - my smile!

(20 August 2009) John Knight.

John Knight

In Praise of Spiders

Smart octapedal locomoter,
Despised by girls - but so adored by boys.
Instant death to every flying insect,
Silently - you never make a noise!

Spinning graceful complex webs, an orb
A funnell or a ladder or a sheet
Elastic just like nylon - also twice as strong
Webs of intrigue and of mystery and deceit!

All British spiders have such lovely names,
Spelling out their nature and their place,
There's garden spiders, grass and stripy zebras
And mothercare and nursery and lace!

Why have you got so bad a reputation?
It's that Miss Muffett whom I blame it on!
You just wanted to share - in her bowl of curd,
One look - and promptly she was gone!

All the stories of Miss Muffet have a picture,
Of a spider that gives every child a fright,
Eight ginormous legs and eight black evil eyes
Serated teeth just ready for a bite!

In my life I've met so many spiders,
In farm and field - at home and overseas,
Lovely helpful creatures - good at pest control,
Don't hate them 'cos they only want to please!

The moral of this tale is PREJUDICE IS BAD!
Whether its concern is man or beast.
The spider in its web - is nature at her height,
Who deserves our admiration at the least!

(Colchester - UK - July 2009) .

John Knight

Loneliness or Solitude?

This poem is dedicated to ALL THE LONELY PEOPLE. It is also dedicated to those who are not lonely but crave THE SOUND OF SILENCE in a World where CHURCH BELLS have been replaced by DECIBELS!

I am never really alone in the 21st Century
Consequently I am a stranger to solitude.
When I think back - over 75 years
I don't remember being alone in the 20th Century either.
I read - in the Colchester Gazette
That 'A lady had lain dead in her flat
In Colchester - for five months! '
Does such isolation really exist today?

Some of my second level acquaintances
Say they are very lonely.
Nobody calls - nobody cares
If they live or even if they die.
They break thier unwelcome solitude
By going out - but they don't fit in!
They choose to sit alone - as if
Solitude was their raison d'etre.
They leave early and scurry back
To feed the CAT!
If you have a CAT or (God forbid) a DOG
Do you still qualify for the lonliness allowance?

Are 'All these Lonely People' miserable?
I dont know it's difficult to say
Because often they won't converse
And if they do they don't communicate!
They live in a synthetic World of TV
Trips to the Supamarket
And the odd (often very odd!) excursion.
'Only the Lonely' know how it really feels!

I visit people in 'Senior Citizens Resthomes'
Places full of good will - but empty of good cheer.
I enter the room and play my banjo.
Some of them sing - some (very occasionally) dance,
But the majority are already dead behind their eyes.
Lovely but lonely - leisurely but lonely.
At the end of their lives - that in reality ended
Years and years and years ago!
I pack my banjo - back in its coffin like case
And breath a short prayer - 'Thank God for Families! '
I'm an orphan but I've got my own family and thirty cousins
And one brother who chooses to live in the middle of Mexico!

Memories cure the ache - but memories shared,
Cure the cause as well
I have a wife, whom I have known for sixty years
So in essence I have never been alone since 1950!

I have three children - somewhere
And eight grandchildren - somewhere else!
Some things can assuage (good word) loneliness:
The care of a neighbour - the love of a friend,
The heartfelt concern of extended families,
A letter - a phone call - even a text or an e-mail!
It's oh so simple to be the means
Of making the lonely a little less lonely.

It's good to know we can be an important link
In the chain of communication to a lonely person.
I crave solitude - but I never want to be really lonely.
I don't want to lie - DEAD - in my flat for five months,
With no one to notice - to call - to care - to communicate.
But it did happen yesterday and it could happen again,
Tomorrow - to me - to you - to anybody.
I would love a megasize Funeral - a real Scouse send-off
With everybody dressed in the ubiquitous RED & BLUE
Six black stallions and a New Orleans Jazz Band playing
'You'll never walk Alone' and 'Just a Closer Walk with Thee'.
Solitude and Loneliness are diametrically opposed.

John Knight

Loyalty to the Mexican Flag - Juramento de la Bandera

Juramento de la Bandera,
Loyalty to the Mexican Flag.
Our flag is the symbol of our loyalty.
It is a symbol that binds us together,
Mestizos, Aztecs, Myans and Europeans
Into one industrious and integrated Nation.
For almost two centuries, since independence
We have flown our Bandera with pride.

At the time of Independence in 1821,
Green - symbolised Independence,
White - the Catholic Faith - and
Red - European and American unity.
Mexico is now a Secular Nation - so
Green - symbolises the Nation's hope,
White - Mexico's inherent unity - and
Red - the blood of our National Heroes.

Our Coat of Arms has not changed!
Each symbol carries National significance.
The Eagle represents the People,
It is combative and defensive.
The snake represents our Enemies,
It is subdued and submissive.
The Nopal represents our challenges,
It is in submission to the Eagle.

The Earth and Water represent our resources,
We have harnessed them wisely.
The Laurel and Oak leaves represent,
The agony and ecstasy of martyrdom and victory.
To our Flag we make these loyal pledges.
To make and keep our Fatherland - independent,
Human and generous, integrated and prosperous.
Mexico is in our heart - Mexico is our existence!

(John Knight - UK - August 2009)

John Knight

My Brother in Heaven

I can't recover.
The occasion after it's experienced,
The time after it's moved on,
The presence after the demise.

I can remember.
The occasions we shared,
The times we spent together,
The presence of a very special person.

A Brother is every man's closest friend.
Each occasion is ameliorated,
All time shared is amplified,
His presence makes the mundane special.

A Brother is a constant companion,
On all special occasions,
At all important times,
His presence is comforting and reassuring.

I can remember his birth,
An occasion for rejoicing for our extended Family,
His birth in real time - 06.09.39.
His presence - a real warm cuddly baby brother!

I can remember his life,
He never missed an occasion or an opportunity.
For him time stood still - every second action filled,
His presence lit any space with love.

I can remember his demise.
Unequal collision of car with bicycle with boy.
His death in real time - 30.09.55.
His physical presence just sixteen beautiful years.

I remember him now.
Each day each special occasion each anniversary,
Sixteen years in Earth time - fifty eight years in Eternity
His spiritual presence? here and now - always and everywhere!
I FEEL HIS PRESENCE NOW!

John Knight

Popocatepetl

It was on my list of things
To see, before I went to Glory!
Things volcanic, things majestic
Things natural - like Old Faithful.

Like an overgrown schoolboy
I ticked them off in a scuffy
Home-made eye-spy book
I started fifty years ago!

It contained hundreds of entries.
The Grand Canyon, the Taj Mahal
(Was that an Indian take-away?)
The Twin Towers and Ground Zero!

Popocatepetl was conspicuous
By his absence until one October day
I received an invitation to my brother's
marriage to Catalina Titizahua.

Saturday 23 November 2002
Tenoch 13 - Puebla - Mexico
Because I was the Best Man
And fluent in Spanish - I went!

The wedding was very spectacular
Very Mexican and very Aztec.
After all the excitement - I sat on the roof
Of Tenoch 13 - contemplating life.

Nobody had warned me - familiarity I guess
The evening sky was very clear.
I knew his profile - and he smoked languidly
To confirm his identity - POPOCATEPETL!

(John Knight - UK)

John Knight

Reach out and you will Receive!

This poem is dedicated to all those out there who are hurtin' and don't know where to turn for help and healing - may your God be with you.

Is your Heart breakin'?
Is your Soul achin'?
Is your Mind disintergratin'?
Is your Body shakin'?
Is your whole Earth quakin'?

Does your Lawn need rakin'?
Does your Bed need makin'?
Does your Cocktail need shakin'?
Does your old Car need refabricatin'?
Does all your Angst need eradicatin'?

I can mend your Heart
I will heal your Soul
I can calm your Mind
I will smooth your Body
I can stabilize your whole Earth
I will mow your Lawn (\$20 per hour!)
I can make your Bed - so you can lie on it peacefully!
I will shake your Cocktail - Angel Juice or Heaven's Nectar?
I can respray your Car - any color as long as it's white!
I will remove all you Angst - visiting hours 24/7!

Who am I - What am I - Where on Earth am I? ? ?
I am the helper at your side
I am much nearer than you think
You only have to REACH OUT
And you will find - that I have been with you - ALWAYS
You just didn't bother to look for me
You were too busy looking inward
And always - always - feelin' so sorry for yourself.
You need to look again - with a positive attitude!
Ask of Me - and you will always receive
Seek for Me - and you will surely find Me
Knock and I will certainly open my Door to you
The Door of genuine Love
The Door of Joy and inner Contentment
The Door of abundant Life
The Divine One said - I AM THAT DOOR!

John Knight

The Person Within

This poem is dedicated to the philosophy of Olfa Drid, in thanks for all the beautiful and emotive poems she is sharing with us.

In the Heart and Soul of me
In the Heart and Soul of you
Is a beautiful fragrant garden
Filed with a love that's true.

Within each precious garden
Is the essence of our Mind
Flowers of sweetest fragrance
Pure and true and kind.

The beauty that's inside of me
The beauty that's inside of you
Is filled with Holy Radiance
A Glory that shines through.

In the deepest depths of you
In the deepest depths of me
Lies the truth and wisdom
Of all eternity!

John Knight

The Secret of Inner and Outer Beauty

INTRODUCTION This is a poem by the lovely Actress Audrey Hepburn. I want to dedicate it to the equally lovely Poemhunter OLFA DRID.

For attractive lips - speak words of kindness
For lovely eyes - seek out the good in people
For a slim figure - share your food with the hungry.
For beautiful hair - let a child run its fingers through it once a day,
For poise - walk with the knowledge that you never walk alone.
People - even more than things - have to be restored, renewed,
Revived, reclaimed, redeemed - never throw anyone out!
Remember - if you ever need a helping hand,
Most of us will find one at the end of each of our arms!
As we grow older most of us still have our two hands,
One for helping ourselves - the other for helping others!

John Knight

What is Man?

It is a fact of Science that in terms of size,
The median between the vastness of the universe
And the minuteness of an electron is - MAN!
This makes the term 'Middleman' much more significant.

Modern technology has unwittingly placed Man at the centre,
The centre of Global Development and Global Destruction.
The centre of praise - for his discoveries and conquest of space
The centre of blame - for pollution and global warming.

What is Man? - Man is a paradox between God and Evolution.
Homo Sapiens is capable of genius and crass stupidity
How does all this look from the perspective of Deity?
Must God, who created Man, bear the ultimate responsibility?

God, in his sovereignty deliberately created a 'middleman'
A physical being - between the heavenly beings
And the other created beings in the species animalia.
'A little lower than the Angels - much higher than the Apes'.

Man is in a privileged position - crowned with 'Glory & Honour'
Man is in a responsible position - responsible for all created things.
What is Man? - Insignificant on a universal scale - but
Very significant in terms of his intellect and abilities!

Homo sapiens has always had a choice - Ape or Angel?
It's all a question of acknowledging the 'Origin of Man'
Protoplasm in a primeaval pool - or created in the Image of God?
Do we worship at the Shrine of Evolution or the Throne of God?

Why do only the successful consider themselves 'Self Made Men'?
God created each one of us and consequently He cares for all of us,
All we have to do is acknowledge Him as our Creator and Sustainer.
'Oh Lord how majestic is your name in all the Earth! '.

John Knight

Wild Beauty

I only saw her once - but it was amazing
Perfection of form - Passion mellowed by Grace & Beauty.
The vision is forever locked in my mind
The love is for eternity locked in my heart.

In 1999, I was in Japan on a business trip
Mundane electronics - and a colleague had tickets
For the Ladies Volley Ball World Championship
She was my boss - it was a question of Noblesse Oblige!

Japan v Tunisia - it was needle match and a full Stadium
The Tunisian Team was heterogeneous
But one young lady stood out - the physique and leap
Of a young and beautiful Gazelle.

All eyes were on her as she rose majestically
To twice her normal height and then smashed the ball
With the force of twenty sledge hammers.
A symbiosis of explosive physical and mental prowess.

Not once but again and again and again.
Japan did not know what had hit them - and
Despite the supportive shrieks of a partisan crowd
Had to concede to Tunisia and their powerful Princess.

After the game despite my search - she seemed to melt away
I asked one of her team mates who was still signing programs
'Who was the Lovely Girl - and what is her name? '
'Ah' - elle a repondu - 'Sa nom est LA BEAUTE SAUVAGE! '

Dedicated to the powerful performance of Olfa Drid

(18 August 2009)

John Knight

Wood Glorious Wood!

This poem is dedicated to all those who are old enough to remember when wood was as important to us as air and water. It is also dedicated to those who live in situations where it still is!

Throw another log on the fire - Mother,
Father go and chop another tree,
Stack the winter log pile higher - Brother,
So when winter comes there's fuel for you and me!

Sharpen up that pile of stakes - Sister,
And plant them all around the cattle pen,
Just ignore the splinters and the blisters,
You're young so all the skin grows back again!

Plane up the seasoned planks to make a table,
And turn those logs to make some fancy legs,
Tongue and groove the planks if you are able,
And then support the legs with wooden pegs!

Every type of wood is so essential
When you have no stone or brick or clay,
We've wooden plates and all kitchen utensils
And are houses are all wood in White Horse Bay.

Oak and Ash and Elm all have their uses
And pine and birch can make a fine canoe,
With wood - like everything - there are abuses
And there are things a woodman should not do!

For fire or fence please - never kill a sappling,
And feed and please your trees to make them grow,
Remove the weeds and briar - and toss them on your fire
And mark your trees so other men will know!

And please respect the trees and other flora,
They're not as green as they might look you know,
Some live for years and others live much shorter
Some grow so quick and others very slow!

Have you ever pondered how a plant grows,
Which is tomorrow in the oven thrown
And have you ever pondered how a plant knows,
The point at which it's reckoned fully grown!

A tree is fixed by roots in its position,
It cannot hunt for food or gather snow
It needs CO₂ and water for nutrition,
As day-by-day its trunk and branches grow.

The structure of its leaves is the proscriber
For it to photosynthesise its food,
To make cellulose and lignin - special fibre

To make it strong and turn it into wood.

Never ever take a tree for granted,
Never break a branch or ever scar its trunk,
And don't disturb the roots when its been planted
AND NEVER TREAT A PIECE OF WOOD AS JUNK!

John Knight