

Poetry Series

C R Clark
- poems -

Publication Date:
2008

Publisher:
Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

C R Clark(1946)

Hello, my name is Richard Clark. My wife Elaine, and I have been married for 33 years. Between us we have three children, a girl and two boys, five grandchildren, one great-granddaughter and one great-grandson. I love my family, my Lord, my church and my country and I hope that my writing will reflect this. I like to consider myself an outdoorsman. I enjoy hunting, fishing, camping, or just exploring forest trails. I enjoy writing poetry about life's experiences. Most of my work will have something to do with family, Outdoor activities and remembering old times. I firmly believe that there is no such thing as a bad poem. Every poem means something to the person who wrote it. It may appeal to me or it may not appeal to me, but that has NOTHING to do with whether or not it is good. For whatever its worth, that's my philosophy on poetry. I do have a personal website that I would invite anyone to visit and comment on. My website is;

*jasper Moses

Along the banks of Cyprus Creek
Where panthers prowl and "gators" creep
The murky water fairly teems
With cottonmouths and Cyprus knees
An unsuspecting soul could drown
Or lose their way and ne'er be found
'Twas here beneath the Spanish moss
A young man came to mourn his loss

Young Jasper Moses had it made
Family wealth and growing trade
The son of southern nobility
Courtly Belles, his love would seek
Local Fathers would scheme and plan
To wed their daughters to such a man
But, Jasper cared for none of these
For, his heart belonged to Bonita Lee

Bonita lived in an outcast thorp
Where most that dwelt were of ill report
Her "Pap, " well known for crime and vice
A blackguard who'd sell his own for a price
But Bonita's heart was young and pure
Uncommon beauty and peerless allure
A Creole maiden of mien so fair
Chestnut skin and long raven hair

But, Jasper's parents despised the girl
They felt that she was beneath their world
Their haughty souls, so swelled with pride
With the girls own "Pap" they soon conspired
To compel his daughter by command or force
And take her away from the outcast thorp
They reasoned their son would repent his spree
And forget the lowborn Bonita Lee

By night the blackguard, Nathaniel Lee
Bound his daughter hand and feet
And bribed a mate on a fishing boat

To hold her there till it reached the coast
But, Bonita's will was fierce and strong
Until, at last, she loosed her bonds
Up on the deck she ran in haste
She longed to see her lover's face

The sailors on the craft that night
Said she dove from the deck forthright
Into the darkness of Cyprus creek
And struck her head on a shallow reef
Her body was placed on the cold hard deck
The wrong, confessed by a penitent mate
The captain steered the ship to port
And returned the girl to the outcast thorp

When the tragic news to Jasper came
He vowed, I'll never be the same
My heart will only faintly beat
My spirit shall forever weep
And though my life continues now
I never shall, my self allow
To give my heart to love so free
As I loved my darling, Bonita Lee

His parents feigned, his grief to ease
And sought to conceal their treachery
But, the truth, young Jasper learned that day
Revealed to him by the Captain's mate
To them he said, no love abides
In hearts that shelter willful lies
Your Son will covet your love no more
And ne'er again will approach your door

Your callous act has broken me
You've taken my darling, Bonita Lee
You've doomed me to a life forlorn
I rue the day that I was born
Your greatest desire you shall not know
The joy of a grandchild, all your own
Your contemptuous line will end with me
For taking my darling, Bonita Lee

Along the banks of Cyprus Creek
Where panthers prowl and "gators" creep
The murky water fairly teems
With cottonmouths and Cyprus knees
'Twas here beneath the Spanish moss
Young Jasper came to mourn his loss
Into the murky swamp that day
He tossed his hat and walked away

Searchers came down Cyprus creek
And combed the swamp for near a week
But all they ever found of him
His hat lodged on a Cyprus limb
Where gator tracks were fresh and dense
They felt 'twas only common sense
This day to end their futile quest
And declare he'd met untimely death

In Cyprus swamp, still to this day
A ghostly presence, the locals say
On moonlit nights may oft be seen
Drifting on the slightest breeze
A Creole maiden with raven hair
Weeps and calls her lover, where
A statement carved upon a tree
Says, "Jasper loves Bonita Lee"

C R Clark

*mose And Bonnie Lee

Way back in the mountain and beyond bread creek
Where muscadines hang from the hardwood trees
The coyotes howl all through the night
And backbones tingle when the catamount cries.
Where the mountain's hard and mighty unforgivin'
And, where the faint of heart got no bus'ness bein'.
Old "Mose" the hermit lived by hisself
In a ratty old shack on the mountain's shelf.
He didn't like people and he didn't like towns.
He didn't like it when folks from the valley came 'round.
But, once in awhile down the mountain he'd go
To get salt and meal at the gen'ral store.

'Twas on one of these trips his life made a change
When he was headin home through a drivin rain.
A little walker pup, soaked plum to the bone
Had been dropped and abandoned on that lonely old road.
With the goods on his back and his head bowed down,
He paid little notice to the rain soaked hound.
When he finally got home he was soppin wet,
So he pulled a blanket up around his head,
And stood by the fire to try and get warm,
Then he saw somp'n movin outside in the yard.
That little wet pup was standin out in the rain
Starin at Mose through the wind'r pane.

Now, it weren't like Mose to care much 'bout nuthin,
But, fer some odd reason he swung the door open
And that little hound pup, not one bit shy,
Come saunterin in and laid down by the fire.
Somp'n 'bout that pup touched old Mose' heart.
He sat hisself down and propped his feet on the hearth.
He said, "pup, this mountain man is pore indeed,
Hope you can make do with some cornbread and beans."
When the pup had finished her "pore man" feed,
She curled herself up 'ginst the old Man's feet.
Old Mose couldn't 'member when he'd felt so pleased
And he called the little pup "Miss Bonnie Lee."

Now, Mose and Bonnie Lee got to be real tight;
When she'd grow'd up she made a powerful sight.
She was big fer a hound and her shoulders was wide,
She had somp'n `sides walker blood to give `er that size.
She was strong as a Dane and she could run all night;
She'd whup'd ever coyote that ever come by.
But, there was this one time they was huntin the hill,
Hadn't been fer Bonnie, old Mose'd been kill't.
A big old catamount jumped from a tree
And knocked the old mountain man down to his knees.
Bonnie was on `em like a flash of lightning
You could hear growls and cat screams all over that mountain

When Bonnie first landed on that big mountain cat,
She grabbed a mouthful of fur at the back of its neck
And lifted that catamount right off of its feet
And they fought as they rolled down the hill to the creek.
When they landed in the water, Bonnie Lee started shakin
And the skin on that old cougar's neck started breakin.
She shook the cat loose and it whirled in the air
And she was left standin with a mouthful of lion hair.
But, that old cat'd had all that it wanted
When it's feet hit the ground, it was scat'in and squallin.
Bonnie's hound instinct said she oughta give chase
But, Mose called her back, He didn't want to tempt fate.

Up there on the mountain, as the years went by,
The light was gettin dim in the old man's eyes.
He'd always loved goin up to the crest;
Seemed like that's where he always felt best.
He'd stare in wonder at what God had created
And tell Bonnie, "I `spect we're the reason he made it."
But, seemed like lately he'd been stumblin a lot
So, Bonnie would lead'm past the blowdowns and rocks.
The old man knew their time was runnin low
And worried `bout Bonnie if he's the first one to go.
So, he ask the Lord, "if I'm the first one to leave,
Won't you please watch over Miss Bonnie Lee? "

Way back in the mountain and beyond bread creek,
Where muscadines hang in the hardwood trees,

The coyotes howl all through the night
And backbones tingle when the catamount cries.
Where the mountain's hard and mighty unforgivin'
And, where the faint of heart got no bus'ness bein.'
A blind old hermit, on a cold winter's night,
Sits by the fireplace in the glowin light,
Thanks the Lord for all the blessins he's had,
In partic'lar the best dog a man ever had.
He props his legs up to warm his feet
And, gently, pats the head of Miss Bonnie Lee.

C R Clark

*ode To An Abandoned Farmhouse

It's just an old abandoned farmhouse
On a weedy, grown up moor
I suspect that it has stood there
For a century or more
Its boards are firm but weathered
From it's windows, shards of glass
Rusted tin upon the rooftop
Keeps its floor as dry as ash

How many has it sheltered
Through the years till its demise?
Children's heights are duly noted
Notches cut and age inscribed
Dejectedly it stands there
Just affronted and ignored
After years of faithful service
Held in thoughtless disregard

It's just an old abandoned farmhouse
On a weedy grown up moor
How faithfully it lingers there
How nobly it endures
Though winds of time shall stroke its eaves
And its tin roof rust and stain
As maturity's honored by hoary crown
Its dignity shall remain

C R Clark

*phantasmagoria

I had a dream and you were there
In lace, with flowers, in your hair
Your beauty shown and lit the place
A constant smile was on your face
You were so young and full of life
And you had agreed to be my wife
The scene was set, the guests arrived
The preacher said, "You may kiss your bride"
But, when I turned and saw your face
Some other man was in my place
And I was standing on the side
As you were gazing into his eyes
Then, when you walked away with him
I felt my heart would surely rend
But, just as I was near despair
Then, I awoke and you were there

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C R Clark

*the Dust Of Long Ago

In the land of thermal waters, many moons ago
When streams in virgin forests, yet with crystal water flowed
Before the Europeans came from lands so far away
And vowed to conquer for their king, this new land they would claim

The "Redman" dwelt these mountains, the trails and piney woods
His father and his father's father many times removed
Had lived and raised their families here within this pristine land
Using only that supplied by nature's bountiful hand

His life came from the mountains, the woods, and crystal streams
He planted fields of corn and groves of fruit and nut trees
He felt close to all God's creatures, a kinship he could see
With the turkey, deer, and bear, and majestic wapiti

He killed only what he needed for his people to survive
And, thus, the game was always here in plentiful supply
He would gather with his people in the longhouse round the fire
And sing of "age old" heroes like Aquixo and Casqua

There were many here in those days, as many as the stars
And they lived in tune with nature so that all could well endure
There were Tunica and Caddo, Quapaw and Osage
There were Natchez and many others before the Europeans came

The Spaniards with DeSoto brought iron weapons, tools, and greed
But they did not bring understanding for the native people's creed
They seized the people's food stores and many they enslaved
They destroyed fields and villages as they passed along their way

The people died by thousands from drought and strange disease
That was brought by the invaders and our people had never seen
Yes, I told my son, these were our people, once mighty, strong, and proud
But now they are just a memory passed on by word of mouth

Tell me father, my son asked, will we be great again, at last? "
Will we sing in the longhouses of mighty leaders of the past?
Will we hunt the woods and mountains and fish the crystal streams
And once more live as brothers with the bear and wapiti? "

These things, I told my son, are things I've never seen
My father told them to me as his father told to him
They live now in our legends that we pass on as we go
But, my son, these things have settled with the dust of long ago

C R Clark

*the Old Man And The Boy

The old man and the boy
Loved to go out to the woods
Collect rich pine and broken limbs
And assorted chunks of wood
They'd pile 'em up and light a fire
And sit on rocks or stumps
And talk about the good old days
And good days yet to come
The old man had such stories
Of back when he was young
And hunted with his brother
Here in these very woods
The boy listened closely
To all the old man said
He loved to hear the stories
And he'd "take in" every word
My "bud" and me used to hunt
All around these hills
Rabbits, squirrels or "possums"
Anything, just to be out here
My grandpap always had some dogs
They grew up chasing squirrels
All were hounds 'cept Bullet
And "who knows what he was"
The hounds would trail and bellow
Every time they caught a scent
Old Bullet kept up with 'em
But he wouldn't make a sound
When Bullet barked you always knew
He was looking at the prey
And you'd better get a move on
Or the squirrel would get away
Many's the time we cut and run
For what seemed like half a mile
Because we'd heard Old Bullet bark
And knew to waste no time
By the time that we would get there
We'd both be out of breath
Couldn't even sight the.22

Till we'd took a minute to rest
One of us would skirt the tree
While the other watched the limbs
When the bushytail moved around the tree
One of us would see him

I miss those days when I was young
I could keep going all day long
Now, my legs don't work like they used to
I can't even see to sight my gun
There's nothing now that I like more
Than coming out to these woods
Telling stories 'round the campfire
And sitting here with you
You see, each time I tell one
My memory takes me back
You might see me close my eyes
'Cause, then when things get quiet
I swear I can hear Old Bullet
Calling me and "bud" to come
My memory makes it seem so real
'Cause, one time, it really was
I can live these hunts all over
As I tell these tales to you
Like when you dream it seems so real
Well, in my memory it's real too
Memories can be powerful things
When you've gone "way down the road"
They can warm your soul, or chill your blood
Just depends on what you allow
So, cultivate the good ones, Son
Don't waste time with the bad
Those I've made here, in "God's back yard"
Are the best I've ever had

C R Clark

***thickets And Thorns Or Sweet Sweet Fruits**

Man is like a plot of land
That basks in God's sunshine
Saturates itself in God's rain
And nurtures life within itself
By means of natural laws
Which, incidentally, God made

Land that's full of sand and rocks
That is left alone by man
Is never tilled and never worked
Cannot produce a good harvest
But only crops of tangled thickets
And rough and prickly thorns

But, if the rocks should be removed
And man should till the sod
Enrich the soil and plant his crops
God will send the sunshine and rain
And the same land will produce
A harvest of sweet, sweet fruits

A human life, when blessed by God
With a knowledge of Jesus Christ
Like a field of good seeds
It is a crop, planted by God
Whose harvest depends on
How well it is worked by man

Thickets and thorns or sweet sweet fruits
Each man, himself, must decide
A worldly life yields a worthless crop
While a life filled with Godly works
Yields a wonderful harvest
Whose lasting value can't be measured

C R Clark

.a Very Logical Answer (Poetic Version Of A Story I Recently Heard

A teacher was, one day, teaching
Her second grader class
The tale of the three little pigs
When she turned to a lovely lass

The teacher ask of Jenny
What did the farmer say
When the little pig ask for straw
To build him a house of hay?

Jenny replied, "the farmer
Was surely brave and big
But I think he was surprised and said
Oh my gosh, a talking pig"

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C R Clark

.come Lord Jesus, Take Me Home

Originally written as a song, tune: Joan Baez, All my trials Lord, soon be over

This earthly life has got me down
When I get home, I'll wear a crown
Come, Lord Jesus, take me home

God has promised me in his word
Eternal life through my risen Lord
Come, Lord Jesus, take me home

I've not yet seen it, but I've been told
Heaven's streets are paved with gold
Come, Lord Jesus, take me home

Holy Spirit leads I know he's right
He comforts me both day and night
Come, Lord Jesus, take me home

When life on earth has come and gone
I'll live in heaven before his throne
Come, Lord Jesus, take me home

Come, Lord Jesus, take me home

©: C R Clark - May 6,1982

C R Clark

.cooperation (Haiku)

Squirrel brushes corn
From my feeder to the ground
Young deer picks it up

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C R Clark

.frozen Forest (Haiku)

Icy crystals cling
Branches glimmer in the sun
Winter's masterpiece

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C R Clark

.hang Gliding

To plunge from high on summit's peak
And ride the current, swift
Survey the earth in sweeping view
As, with the morning clouds, I drift

To look the eagle in the eye
While soaring heaven's blue
And float on silent wafts of air
Blind to common hullabaloo

It would be grand to hang below
The glider as I tour the sky
And so I would if I just could
Acquire sufficient nerve to try

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C R Clark

.ice Storm Chili

We rose that day, no power at all
The whole county stymied from ice and snow
The central heat, though gas, no good
For, without the "juice, " it would not go

I lit the gas heater on the wall
Thank God, we had it, or we might have froze
Then rummaged through my camping gear
For lanterns, lamps, and Coleman stove

The kids came up they had no power
And theirs was an all electric home
The grandkids bundled and played in the snow
Until we forced them to come get warm

I went to the cabinet for my chili pot
Then raided the freezer for venison, ground
And checking to see what else was there
Tomatoes from last summer's garden, I found

A couple of onions and seasonings in hand
The Coleman stove on top of the range
A blue flame burning beneath the pot
The plan for survival was now in place

Then stir the kettle, the chili bubbles
Ain't nothing like chili on a cold, cold day
Dished it up and served with crackers
Ice storm chili, the best I ever ate

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C R Clark

.irrelevant

From somewhere deep within my being
The shadow of desperation harbors doubt
And my usual optimism is shaken
But, I pray, it is still intact
I refuse to yield to the temptation
To ask the useless question, why?
As if, to suggest that someone other than I
Were to blame for my mistakes in this life
Though ease and, even, affluence, I believe,
Are well within my reach, it seems,
They tend to "hover" just beyond my grasp
And though, distantly, I have seen them
And know, without a doubt, of their propinquity
They have, thus far, eluded me
And I sometimes feel... irrelevant

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C R Clark

.melancholy Dream

Many times when I'm alone, I dream of when we used to go
With sandwiches, out to the lake and watch the people swim
We'd laugh and play for hours, games with little meaning
Until the day had faded, then we'd pack and head for home

When you left, I felt like life was draining from my body
The endless ache of loneliness left me so forlorn
Despair would overtake me in the lonely mid night hours
If God had not been with me, I would not be here today

Often hard times make a man depend upon the Lord
And try to live his life, as God would have him to
I know he is the only hope this boy will ever have
My prayer is he will bring us back together very soon

I never will forget the first time I ever saw you
Wrapped up in a blanket, snuggled in a nurses arms
Nor the times you went to sleep, head upon my shoulder
Son, the first time you said "daddy" will ring forevermore

Often hard times make a man depend upon the Lord
And try to live his life, as God would have him to
I know he is the only hope this boy will ever have
My prayer is he will bring us back together very soon

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C R Clark

.mighty "jug's" Ride

Flying low over stumps and rocks
Dodging people and trees
Mighty "Jug" mans the wheel
Of his infamous speed machine

He'd put it together with heaps of scraps
Gathered from all around
Re-rung a Tecumseh, bolted it on and
Said, "That oughta burn the ground"

Sailing across the new mown lawn
And out through the Johnson grass
He jumped a ridge and came down hard
And might near busted his..... head

Moses! He cried, that was fun, but
Don't think I'll make a repeat
That machine got me down out there in the dirt
And wallered all over me

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C R Clark

.regret (Haiku)

Ain't camped once this year
Ain't had a single campfire
Something's wrong with that

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C R Clark

.syble

Each day she sits in a rolling chair
Constrained by straps to avert a spill
Not knowing who or where she is
Not knowing those who love her still

Not knowing if it's cold outside
Or if the sun does shine this day
Not knowing, since that awful time
Her memory was rudely swept away

Her day is filled with dull routine
Of nurses, pills, food, soft and flat
She cannot eat, so must be fed
Alzheimer's toll is truly sad

But once she was young and full of life
She loved to laugh and play and sing
Walk barefoot through the meadow grass
Ride horses, wade in quiet streams

She went for strolls down shady lanes
And talked with friends of girlish things
Of life and love and boys and goals
Her life was filled with hope and dreams

She loved the man who won her heart
She wept when death took him away
Now she longs for reunion sweet
And so, each day she sits and waits

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C R Clark

.the First Cool Breath Of Autumn

The first cool breath of autumn
Is a balm of sweet delight
Refreshing all it touches
In the day and through the night
The air seems light and bracing
With each slow, deliberate breath
The first cool breath of autumn
Brings on pangs of anxiousness
I enjoy the greening flora
As the stage of spring arrives
When nature seems to waken
From winter's tired and dreary guise
But, I'd rather walk a winding trail
That forest creatures tread
And whiff the rich aromas
In autumns brilliant shed
Summer has many pleasures
And at times a stifling heat
But it's a time of preparation
For a harvest rich and sweet
Each season is a wonder
A gift from God on high
But the first cool breath of autumn
Is a balm of sweet delight

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C R Clark

.the Other Man's Shoes

A friend drew me aside one day
And, in me did confide
Of problems with a wayward Son
Such as he could scarce abide
I listened while he told me
All, the things his Son would do
And how he was getting desperate
For he'd never worn such shoes
In my pride, I told him flatly
I know what I would do
(And, I laid it out in line and verse)
If I were in his shoes
It seemed to me, so simple
It was, oh so very clear
But, alas, his Son was not my own
Not one that I held dear
Looking back I see the error
In the sad advice I gave
But, I learned a timely lesson
About how good friends should behave
It all seemed, somehow, different
When the chickens came home to roost
The proper thing was more readily seen
While feigning to wear his shoes
These days I simply listen
If, in me, a friend confides
About things I have never known
And try to keep my thoughts inside
One who's certain what he would do
In someone else's shoes
Has, likely, never worn those shoes
And never supposes too

Written by C.R. Clark-12/25/2007

C R Clark

.valentine 2009

If I could paint a masterpiece
In portrait show my lady's grace
As da Vinci in his finest hour
Attained in Mona Lisa's face

If I could write a sonnet grand
In poem show my lady's soul
That to the eyes of all who read
Rapturous tears would freely flow

If I could achieve these shining feats
Though great, sufficient would not be
To reveal the love that's in my heart
Or impart my lady's worth to me

I love you Babe

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C R Clark

A Brash Hummingbird

My wife keeps a feeder for her dear hummingbirds
Outside our window it hangs in the shade
Hummers refresh themselves sunup till dark
They sip and they slurp that red hummer kool aid

There's one little hummer, a brash one indeed
On occasion the feeder went dry for a day
Flew up to the window, hovered, peeked in
And scolded my lady for her negligent ways

She mixed up a new batch of red hummer kool aid
And to hang it up high, she prevailed upon me
When that brash little hummer returned for his drink
He bowed through the window to my lady and me

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C R Clark

A Coffee And Hickory Nut Break

The sky was clear that autumn day
A dried out pile of brush
Had needed burning for quite some time
But there'd never been a rush

Let's go outside, I said to Spud
And burn that old brush heap
We'll take some coffee with us
'Cause I'm sure we'll need a break

We were leaning up against a tree
Little Spud and me
When I noticed nuts there on the ground
That had fell from the hickory tree

I wish we had a hammer, Spud
I'd show you something good
I'll get it grandpa, he replied
And off to the house he ran

When he got back we looked around
And found a large flat stone
And placed it there beside our tree
Near the rocks we were sitting on

I placed a nut atop the stone
And with the hammer, whacked it
As Spud looked on, it split in two
And I showed him the meat inside it

I opened up my pocketknife
And picked the sweet meat out
Spud liked the taste a lot, he said
Good thing there was more about

We sat there while the brush heap burned
We whacked, and picked and drank
Till the coffee was gone, the fire was out
And Spud was in need of a nap

I believe that I will never forget
That wonderful autumn day
When Spud and I burned a big brush pile
And took a coffee and hickory nut break

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C R Clark

A Forgotten Man

His face was brown and wrinkled
His clothes were old and worn
Sitting on a sidewalk bench
He watched the street as traffic swarmed

He seemed so lonely as he sat there
No one paid him any mind
The only time I saw him smile
Was when he looked down and found a dime

He finally turned to me and said
Young man, do you know the time
I glanced at my watch and told him
Yes sir, it's half past nine

Well, I've still got a couple of hours
Son, ain't it a pretty day
I'll just sit here and soak the sun up
Before I mosey on my way

Are you supposed to meet someone, I asked
Oh no, came his reply
Well, sometimes an old friend comes by
We sit and tell each other lies

What kind of lies you tell, I asked
He looked at me and almost grinned
You don't want to get me started, son
Oh, you're too young to understand

You look to be about my daughter's age
She's married and got two sons
One's fifteen and the other's ten
I've never seen the youngest one

But, I've got his pictures, though, he said
He's a healthy looking kid
The last one's I got was five years ago
I s'pose he's grow'ed a lot since then

I said, you mean it's been ten years
Since your family's been to see you
He said, well, more like eleven
But they both work, they're pretty busy

Still, it would be nice, he said
If I could see them one last time
Doc told me 'bout a month ago
I don't have a lot more time

I phoned and told my girl last week
She talked it over with her husband, Dan
They said they'd try to come in June
Now, if I can just hold on till then

It's not that they don't want to come
He said, as he looked at me
They're just so doggone busy, son
It's hard for them to get time free

As he rambled on, I understood
His need for telling lies
He made excuses for an ungrateful child
Who couldn't care less if her daddy died

Now, I always, considered myself a man
Some say a man should never cry
But as the old man finished his story
A mist began to fill my eyes

He noticed the tears and said to me
Son, I guess that I was wrong
You're not too young to understand
I guess age don't matter none at all

I watched him as he ambled off
He used a cane to make his way
I just noticed in the paper
The old man died yesterday

March 1,1982

C R Clark

A Lonely Man

A lonely man in the midst of a crowd
Is the loneliest man of all
If only he could forget his pride
He could make friends of them all

Copyright: C R Clark - 7/4/1981

C R Clark

A Mellow Afternoon

A cool Thanksgiving afternoon
Cousins, at grandpa's, hard at play
Parents, all visiting, on the porch
The sun shone bright, a bluebird day

Covering a gently rising knoll
Tall, latent grass, a chestnut shade
Sheltered there, I lay me down
In heaven's warmth, to luxuriate

'Twas here in tranquil solitude
My mind explored illustrious paths
And rode on waves of mellow dreams
At peace in a billowing sea of grass

© C R Clark 1/10/2009

C R Clark

A Place To Pray

The autumn leaves fell to the ground
One crisp October day
As through the forest walked a man
To find a place to pray

His mind was filled with worldly stuff
Of problems great and small
He knew he'd never rest until
He gave the Lord, them all

The forest welcomed the troubled soul
To it's leafy, splendored halls
And there in the woods, the man knelt down
And to the Lord, poured out his heart

There's no better place in all the world
To be alone with God
Than in his forest on a cool clear day
When autumn leaves begin to fall

Copyright C R Clark-3/15/82

C R Clark

A Slow, Cool Summer Rain

Ah, to lounge on a tin roof porch

As a sl

ow, cool summer rain
Washes away the gathered dust
That seems to cover everything
The garden plants have wilted
From the stifling, summers heat
But, they all begin to liven up
As their roots, the raindrops reach
As the rain descends from heaven
And meets the roof of tin
Its rhythm soothes and comforts
With its slow hypnotic din
Like water slowly trickling
Down a creek bed over stones
The raindrops on the roof
Induce a soft euphoric tone
And then, one's mind may wander
To another place and time
And as the rain continues falling
The earth is nourished and revived

Copyright C R Clark 3/19/2008

C R Clark

Ain't We Baby

Ain't we got a good thing going, honey
Ain't we, ain't we baby
Ain't we got a fine little pair of young, uns
Ain't we, ain't we baby
A cotton top boy and a blue-eyed girl
Prettiest things in this old world
Oh Baby, we got a good thing going

We got us a house out in the country
Got us a yard full of young pine trees
Got an old hound dog that's full of fleas
And bushels of love and we're living free
Oh Baby, we got a good thing going

We're clearing land for a garden spot
Gonna have a bean and tomater crop
Raise a couple of hogs, we'll have ham to eat
And next winter we won't buy groceries
Oh Baby, we got a good thing going

Ain't we got a good thing going, Honey
Ain't we, Ain't we Baby
Ain't we got a fine little pair of young'uns
Ain't we, Ain't we Baby
A cotton top boy and a blue-eyed girl
Prettiest things in this old world
Oh Baby, we got a good thing going

Copyright: C R Clark -April,1976

C R Clark

An Obtuse Request

It's very true that in myself
The virtue of patience is sadly want
So, Lord, I ask you grant to me
The gift of patience and if you please
Make my wait time short

Copyright C R Clark 12/16/2008

C R Clark

Bethel's Redemption

There were trees the size of basketballs that grew from twixt the blocks
And vines, of varying degrees of life, entwining the hand lain rocks
And water trickled and sometimes spewed through the copious spouting holes
So, they told us, "Boys, go clean it off and take care to break no bones."
And, it was climb boys climb, across the face of them blocks
Once you get all this tangle off, we'll redeem this pile of rocks.

So, off we went across the face of that vertical thicket, dense
Swinging power saws and various manual cutting instruments.
Though all the while we were conscious of the perilous rocks below,
We cut them oaks and sweet gum trees and dropped `em down the hole.
And it was balance boys balance, take care to control your feet.
There's broken bones or likely worse if you slip and follow those trees.

So we cleaned the back of Bethel like the day the blocks were laid,
And then across the top we cut the vines and brush away.
On the day that we were done with her, that old dam really shined,
And they told us, " boys get off her now and we'll spray her down with gunite."
And it was down boys down, get down off Bethel's rack,
And, I hope I'm long retired before them vines and trees grow back.

Copyright C R Clark 1/13/08

C R Clark

Coco

She was down around the pump house
When I saw her Sunday morn
Some knucklehead had dumped her out
And left her lost and lorn
She would tag along behind me
Every time I made a round
A friendly little pup, she was,
A fuzzy shade of brown
I had seen a hundred like her,
The world is full of knuckleheads,
Who routinely, dump unwanted pets
To roam and starve to death
Never, in the past,
Had any ever turned my head
But, something about her touched me
And I couldn't help myself
When I got off, I picked her up
And put her in my truck
Took her home and made her family
She's no longer just a mutt

Copyright C R Clark-3/07/2008

C R Clark

Come Get Me, Lord Jesus

As a child I used to wonder
What the Rapture might really be
When I heard the old folks talk about it
It always frightened me
A peculiar thing it somehow seemed
That would carry off kids
In the middle of their dreams
And take them away to, who knows where
And deprive them of parents
When they finally got there
But since I'm grown I realize
The Rapture, to Christians, is highly prized
And since I'm a Christian and Jesus is mine
If raptured today, I never would die
Now I long for the time, when Jesus will come
And take me away to his mansion above
To live in a world where everything's right
And visit with God and my loved ones on high
No human wisdom can ever describe
The way that I feel, what a glorious high
As I look toward Zion and say with a shout
"Come get me, Lord Jesus, " my fear has run out

Copyright C R Clark-6/10/81

C R Clark

Come On Fellers, Loosen Up

To the company that supplies our uniforms
This letter is written to alert and inform
We don't really like what you've gone and done
We liked things better like they used to run

Ya'll changed our britches, now we can't breathe
Traded our "Dickies" for some new blue jeans
They don't rightly fit, they're way too tight
When I wear `em, my voice starts to sound real high

Ya'll need to consider who you're dealing with
We're all grown men, not high school kids
We don't like bending to be so hard
We like loose blue jeans not leotards

Come on fellers, won't you help us, please
Give us back our "Dickies" loose blue jeans
We don't really care `bout tryin to look "buff"
Come on fellers, loosen up

Copyright C R Clark-4/27/2008

C R Clark

Dandy Don

The groundhog comes each evening
And forages on the lawn
Even though he doesn't know it
I call him Dandy Don

I'd like to tell him of his name
But, I guess it just can't be
For, the slightest movement on my part
And Dandy Don will flee

Two mallards live here on the lake
They swim from the other shore
And lounge for hours there on the lawn
While Dandy Don explores

At times some deer will happen by
Just passing across the lawn
With no attention paid, at all
By the foraging Dandy Don

Why then is he so fearful
When I just open up the door
I guess that he, somehow, suspects
That I'm a carnivore

He wouldn't be so worried
Even though, I do eat meat
If he could only understand
On these feet, I ain't fleet

So, if you ever see me running
Just hide behind a tree
And don't look for what I'm chasing
'Cause something's chasing me

Copyright C R Clark-4/13/2008

C R Clark

Dee, The Young Master's Mare

She was just a new endeavor, maybe about half grown
But there was "spirit" in her eyes the day the boy brought her home

I thought the new would wear off and his interest soon would fade
But he never shirked his time with her his dedication never waned

The sun shown on her flaxen mane, in the field, as she romped and played
And she looked like an Indian pony running free out on the range

The boy fed and stroked her, groomed and talked to her and she knew
That he really cared about her and so the love between them grew

As, often times it happens, things longed for seem to hide
And it seemed the time would never come when Dee was old enough to ride

But, if one thing's true in this life, time moves at a natural pace
We can never speed the process all things have a time and place

When, at last, the time had come and her back could bear the load
He placed the saddle on her and gently climbed aboard

Though she was somewhat nervous the load did not offend
It seemed she truly recognized the one who rode her was her friend

Each day they rode the back roads and the trails around the place
As dreams of competitions began to take on shape

They joined up as "pard'ners" with the "Dark Horse" racing team
Chuck wagons raced around the track, the competition there was keen

They, two, would chase the wagons as they raced around the track
They had to cross the finish line before their wagon team could pass

They ran in many races and many times they won
Their first year in competition, in the state, they were number one

It was wondrous just to watch them as they raced around the track
This beautiful paint with flowing mane and my son sitting on her back

They took home many prizes, gold buckles, trophies and such
But, compared to the love between them, those things didn't matter much

They say when you're on the bottom the only way to go is up
Sadly, the opposite is sometimes true when you're already on the top

One day Dee started limping and daily it got worse
There was no apparent reason for this dreadful, sudden curse

It was saddening just to watch her try to walk on hooves so sore
And then she lay down on the ground, she could stand and walk no more

The "Doc, " again was summoned, his words were "chilling" as icy rain
He said if Dee were his horse, he wouldn't let her bear the pain

With heavy heart and defeated gaze the boy then acquiesced
And, as the potion was prepared, his heart sank in his chest

The boy then dropped down to his knees and placed his face against his friend
In that moment there was silence as the potion was put in

As the pain eased in her body, as if whispered in the wind,
It seemed an almost audible voice said, simply, "thank you, my friend"

Copyright: C.R. Clark 3/24/07

C R Clark

Feelings Can Be Deceptive

A wise man once told me, some years ago
When you feel a dilemma is so direly real
You should surely reflect on well founded facts
And do not rely on just how you feel

For feelings, my friend, deceptive may be
A bent by some fleeting emotional need
Don't base your decisions on feelings alone
They might take you someplace you'd rather not be

C R Clark

First Americans

Thru the glass of my perception
Looking back in spans of time
Beyond all that's in my memory
Back before grandfather's time
Before the declaration
Made our independence real
Before the pilgrims came to Plymouth
Even before Columbus sailed
I can see them in the forests
In the valleys and the hills
Living as they had for ages
By their wits and by their wills
This land was not discovered
By explorers from abroad
But by the American Indian
Who had always called it home

Copyright C R Clark-7/25/07

C R Clark

For The Good Of Mortal Man

Originally written as a song: Tune 'Because He Lives'

There was a man who walked the earth
Filling men with love, doing good for all
He was sacrificed, nailed to a cruel cross
He gave his life for the good of mortal man

This man was Jesus, this man was Jesus
He is the true and living Son of God
He gave his life as an atonement
For the sin, for the sin of mortal man

They nailed him to a cross at Calvary
They pierced his side and mocked him too
They cursed at him, until he died there
He gave his life for folks like you and me

This man was Jesus, this man was Jesus
He is the true and living Son of God
He gave his life as an atonement
For the sin, for the sin of mortal man

He suffered there to pay a sin debt
Made by a world, lost and undone
He prayed to God, to forgive his enemies
And then he died, three days later, rose again

This man was Jesus, this man was Jesus
He is the true and living Son of God
He gave his life as an atonement
For the sin, for the sin of mortal man

Copyright: C R Clark January 1975

C R Clark

Forever Mom, I Love You Too

You gave me life, you gave me love
You were God's gift from above
First to Dad, then to brothers, three
You were God's first gift to me

You taught us how to live and love
You sought directions from above
To bring your boys up straight and true
'Cause you felt we were his gifts to you

Dad used a belt when the need arose
But, that was not what upset me most
T'was when upon your face, I'd gaze
And see disappointment on your face

But, no matter what, I always knew
Your love would be forever true
And I think you know, I hope you do
Forever, mom, I love you too

© C R Clark 5/11/2008

C R Clark

Ghost Critter Creeps

Ghost Critter creeps
In the middle of the night
Molesting my sleep
Causing me a fright
Out on the ground
Running around
Rattling leaves
Making all kind of sounds
Flashlight beam
Can't find him in the night
He manages to keep
Just ahead of the light
He only comes out
In the midst of my dreams
Disrupting my sleep
Seems to be his main scheme
At first I was startled
And just had to see
What brand of critter
Was harassing me
Year after year
The same thing occurs
He must train his offspring
To carry on his curse
But to this day
I never have seen
Just what breed of scoundrel
The ghost critter be
But, it's gone on so long now
In a new light, I see
The ghost critter's presence
Seems normal to me
So, now when I'm awakened
In the middle of the night
I just roll over and smile
All's well
The ghost critter's back

Copyright: CR. Clark 11/28/05

C R Clark

Girls Look Great In Camo

The debutantes seem all the rage
Their beauty is without question
As portraits spread the society page
Of our local, quaint newspaper

They look elegant in their designer gowns
Their hairstyles are impeccable
And, as well, their carriage and demeanor
At the annual spring cotillion

The young men strive as they vie for favor
And a waltz with these young ladies
Designers show their works of art
Being worn by these elegant maidens

But, there's another style in fashion's thread
And that's the style for which I'd opt
It's known by various colorful names
Like Woodland, Realtree, and Mossy Oak

And, I know, if ever these lovely maids
Would shed those courtly designer gowns
And don some camo and hunting boots
Their awesome beauty would reign, renown

Now some will call me a "tacky" sort
Or impugn my raising and say I'm an oaf
But, "what the heck, I'm a proud redneck"
And girls do look great in camo

Copyright C R Clark-2/06/2008

C R Clark

Granddad Had No Teeth

Granddad couldn't eat the crust
From Grandmother's crispy cornbread
'Cause Granddad didn't have no teeth
And had to "gum" whatever he "et"
But, it all worked out, fine as "frog hair"
He'd dig the middle out
And leave the crispy crust for me
When I was at their house

Copyright C R Clark-2/14/2008

C R Clark

Grandma Sang A Special

Grandma sang a special in Montgomery
In the church where her youngest preached the word
He turned the tape recorder on and caught it
And still today, my Grandma can be heard

Grandma sang "I know who holds tomorrow"
And she sang it loud for everyone to hear
Today my Grandma's singing it for Jesus
'Cause he held a place for her in heaven's choir

Grandma sang a special in Montgomery
And every time I hear that tape today
If I shut my eyes and listen to it closely
It seems like she is right here in this place

Grandma sang "I know who holds tomorrow"
And she sang it loud for everyone to hear
Today my Grandma's singing it for Jesus
'Cause he held a place for her in heaven's choir

Grandma sings her specials now in heaven
And I'm sure that all who hear her say Amen!
I look forward to the day I'll be in heaven
And, in person, I'll hear Grandma sing again

Grandma sang "I know who holds tomorrow"
And I know he holds tomorrow for me too
One day he'll come back and take me with him
'Cause he held a place for me in heaven too

Grandma sang "I know who holds tomorrow"
And she sang it loud for everyone to hear
Today my Grandma's singing it for Jesus
'Cause he held a place for her in heaven's choir

Copyright: C R Clark -9/13/08

C R Clark

Great Day On The Stand

What a morning
Wonderful morning
Perfect in every way
Cloudy sky, fifty degrees
And just a little wisp of wind

What a morning
Beautiful morning
Perfect in every way
No rain, no biting bugs
And just a short hike to my stand

What a morning
Glorious morning
Perfect in every way
Except, the deer, they stayed away
But hey, it's been a splendid day

Copyright: C R Clark 12/02/05

C R Clark

Greener Grass

I was standing by the river
Gazing to the other side
The grass appeared much, greener there
The sun, much brighter, shined

But, the river, it was mighty
Much too deep and wide to span
But, I felt a longing in my heart
To dwell in that fair land

My friends said, they thought me mad
It was just another scene
No better and no worse than here
No more peaceful, nor serene

But, I was steadfast in my dream
And began to build a boat
That would carry me and all my goods
To that lovely, distant shore

I cast off on a balmy morn
And arrived at eventide
As I set my feet on that new sod
I could feel my fervor rise

At daybreak, as I walked around
This new land to survey
My heart sank, as I became aware
'Twas not unlike my former place

As I stood there by the river
Gazing to the other side
The grass appeared much greener there
The sun, much brighter, shined

Copyright C R Clark-2/27/2008

C R Clark

Hog Killing Time

It always happened in the fall of the year
When the temperature dropped and left a chill in the air
We'd pile fire wood round the old wash pots
Fill `em up with water and get it real hot
The hog was stuck while still in the pen
Then hoisted up and laid on a sled
With a horse or tractor we'd pull'm on up
As near as we could to the hot wash pots
We'd cover'm with tow sacks to hold in the heat
And scald'm real good to make the hair release
I remember that wet, musty smell in the air
As we used sharp knives to scrape off the hair
Once the hair was scraped off that side
We'd flip'm over and do the rest of the hide
Then the men folk would hoist'm back up
And dropp out the innards in a big wash tub
Then they'd let'm down in the bed of the truck
And take'm to the women and they'd cut'm up
Into hams and bacon and chops and ribs
And little pieces to run through the sausage mill
There was a lot more fat than the sausage required
So they'd put it in a wash pot that set on the fire
They'd render it down and dip the cracklin's all out
Then, you know what was left? A pot full of lard
They'd put it in buckets then for goodness sakes
Use it to fry taters and make cornbread and cakes
Weren't none of that crisco or peanut oil
Like modern folks get when they go to the store
Just good ole lard, one hundred percent country
As `merican as apple pie, `lasses, and cow salve butter
Then the men folk would take them bacon slabs an ham
Out to the smoke house where they'd rub `em all down
With sugar cure and then they'd have to set
For, what seemed like forever, `fore they could be et
But once they was ready, what a treat that would be
If I live to be a hundred I'll never forget
Them sugar cured hams and bacon, woooyes
By then, it was generally getting towards dark
'cause we might'a been working up three or four hogs

We'd take all the sausage meat into the house
And get the old hand cranked sausage mill out
We'd take turns a crankin 'cause yer arms'd give out
But that old mill jest kept spittin it out
When we got it all ground, it was seasoning time
And 'course we had to test it, 'cause it had to be right
Mix in some salt, red pepper and sage
Then fry up a batch and we'd all have a taste
Us young'uns knew we was in fer a treat
'cause fresh kilt hog meat jest can't be beat
I'd looked forward to this part all day
'cause, I loved testing sausage that old country way
I can see Pa or my uncle standing there at the stove
They'd fry a batch up and say what does it need
A little more pepper and a little more sage
Then fry up some more and we'd have another taste
You just can't find great sausage anymore
You sure can't buy it when you go to the store
They call theirs country but that's really a stretch
'cause it don't compare to the real thing that much
Could be why the store bought just don't stand a chance
Is 'cause it jest don't have the whole 'sperience
I love to remember all the great things we did
A way back yonder when I was a kid
Times like this have pretty much gone by
Young'uns today don't understand why
We often reflect on the things that we've done
And wish we could have another day in the sun
They think we're old fogies 'cause we often do pine
For things we remember like hog killing time

Copyright C R Clark-4/20/07

C R Clark

I Love You, I Love You Too

I love you
I love you, too
Do these terms mean the same?
I'm not sure they really do
You see, one term is a reply
The other must be said first
It would not sound correct, at all
To say, I love you too, first
It's also a somewhat lesser risk
To reply, I love you too
Because, I love you, leaves you open
And could, maybe, be refused
But, if, I love you, is really true
Then go ahead and say it
For if your favor is not returned
That really doesn't change it
Love and romance are not the same
Real love is so much deeper
Like the love of parents for a child
Like Jesus loves us sinners
Real love requires no like response
But stands all by itself
Does not demand agreeing minds
It is in and of itself
But if, alas, you falter
And the other says, I love you
It would not be incorrect to say
I love you, and leave off the too

Copyright C R Clark-4/8/07

C R Clark

I Revel In This Moment

Even after all these married years,
I still love waking up next to you
You're lying on your side, on my left arm,
Head resting on my shoulder
And your arm stretched across my chest,
Our legs are intertwined
I can feel the rhythm of your breathing
And your warm breath against my skin
Even though you are still asleep
Your closeness overwhelms my senses
I have been awake for an hour
But, I don't want to move
For then, the moment would be broken
And I revel in this moment

Copyright C R Clark-3/16/2008

C R Clark

I Search For My Love

In the early morning
I search for my love
By the stream and the meadow
I call her name
I look on the mountain
And down in the dell
I search for my love
But to no avail
She's hiding, she's hiding
The whippoorwills say
Your love is in hiding
She's running away
She ran to the woods
When it barely was light
The poor thing was crying
She had been all night
Go back to your bed
And wait for her there
Try not to worry
And do not despair
Your love will come home
For her true love is you
She'll come to your bed
When her malady's through

Copyright: C R Clark – 9/3/1981

C R Clark

I Talk To Jesus

When I'm lost and feeling lonely
And I think that no one cares
When the day closes in around me
And my eyes well up with tears
When my friends all desert me
And my family don't understand,
Self esteem goes down to zero
And my hope turns to despair
I talk to Jesus
Jesus talks back to me
He shows me the good things
That I've been too blind to see
He shows me I still have friends
They were really there all the time
He shows me, my twisted life
Was mostly, just in my mind
I talk to Jesus
And he gives me peace within
He gave me a new life
Now he wants to use that life
Though, I always wonder
Just what he sees in me,
I guess I already know
It's just that he loves me

Copyright C R Clark-May,1981

C R Clark

I'm Hooked On Ph (For Lucianne Fasolo)

Many verses, I've scribbled down
O'er the years and I have found
They, mostly, sat on shelves, unread
By anyone, but me

I longed to share them with other folks
But, when the time came, I would choke
I felt they didn't care to read
My thoughts in poetry

Then, one day I was exploring
The web for works of well known poets
I stumbled on a site, refreshing
Poemhunter. Com

I joined up and published ten
Of poems I had already penned
Then, before much time had passed
I received my first comment

I was thrilled, to say the least
That someone out there had noticed me
And actually took the time to say
I enjoyed your poetry

I think that I will ne'er forget
The first comment, my work would get
On PH, I'm now "hooked" and thank
The lovely Lucianne

Copyright C R Clark-2/29/2008

C R Clark

Illumination

The radiant Sun brings light to the day
And chases away night's darkened skies
Revealing beauty that was hidden therein
Illuminating God's marvelous design

But, the night is also blessed with its light
That gleams in the dark, ethereal expanse
The heavenly bodies that glimmer so bright
Illumine the blue with their warm radiance

Our learning requires an additional light
Imparted by those trained to edify
Our minds with essential and cultural facts
To illumine an, otherwise, uninformed life

Then, there's the light most special of all
The light of the world, the redemption of man
The Son is the light that releases from sin
And illumines the soul as no other light can

Copyright C R Clark-3/11/2008

C R Clark

In Stealth I Sit, In Forest Deep

In stealth I sit, in forest, deep
Ere the light of morning
As clouds collect, my spirit craves
The shower, fast approaching

A cloak of olive casts facade
Amorphous, I appear
No form, but dry, beneath the folds
To bask in heaven's joyful tears

Fedora's brim beneath the hood,
From eyes, the drib, restrains
And clamor fades to inner peace
With the patter of the rain

Copyright C R Clark-5/7/2008

C R Clark

Joker

When my wife and me got married
She had this little dog
He didn't like me none too much
He was rotten to the core
He would "pee" my hat and shoes
Anytime they were left out
He considered me an interloper
Living in HIS house
He'd race me to the bedroom
Every night when we'd retire
And bury up between the sheets
And I'd have to drag him out
More than once I told him
"Joker, " this ain't gonna work
I married her, she' my wife now
You can't sleep with her no more

Copyright C R Clark-2/22/2008

C R Clark

Knave Of The Watery World

He sits atop his castle wall
To observe his lowly serfs
And demands of them by word and deed
His lordship to observe

He imagines that his mind is great
A brilliant, shining light
Ore shading all the serfs who dwell
In the shadow of his might

He is a giant, in his own eyes
But all around him know
He altered when good fortune came
His arrogance, great, did grow

His proud position, suits him not
His prowess sadly lacks
And, somewhere deep within his mind
He abhors this well known fact

He rightly fears the day, perhaps
His ineptness comes to light
So, conjured aspersions, he doth cast
On any serf in sight

In truth, a viper, his lordship be
A perfidious, scheming churl
Who thrives from work of better men
This knave of the watery world

Copyright C R Clark-4/09/2008

C R Clark

Little Dude's Treasure

Little Dude and his Little Wife
Settle down to married life
He goes to work, comes home to spouse
They smooch and cuddle, play a little house
Paint a shanty, shoot a "nanny"
Cook a deer steak, just like Granny
Take a tom, a squirrel or two
Make a pot of rabbit stew
Single life ain't even missed
'Cause life don't get no better'n this

Copyright C R Clark-4/16/2008

C R Clark

Marbles (Circa '54)

Recess time out on the schoolyard
A circle is drawn on the ground
In the center will rest the stakes of the game
On top of a long thin mound

Four young lads are gathered around
In their pockets they're "diggin" deep
Each produces three shiny orbs
There's Larry, Tommy, Freddy and Me

The orbs are lined up atop the mound
We draw straws to see who's first
Then each of us retrieves our "Taw"
Our most prized marble on earth

Larry's Taw is "The Solid Black"
Tommy's, "The Old Red and White"
Freddy's is "The Stealie"
And mine, the esteemed "Cat's Eye"

I was never that fond of football
I Loved "Round Ball", but had no gift
At baseball, I could "hold my own"
But, at marbles, I was deft

I went home that day, "a winner"
My pockets filled with the stakes
I'd won everything except their "Taws"
But those I would never take

When I got home, I realized
This lad was in trouble deep
When my mom saw my bulging pockets
She knew I'd been "playing for keeps"

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C R Clark

Me And Lew

As my mind goes drifting backwards
I remember happy times
In the summer, when school was out
And my time was really mine
I'd go out to my Grandpa's farm
And meet up with Cousin Lew
We'd make tracks for the mountaintop
And stay till day was through

When we'd get up to the mountaintop
We'd be in another world
Sometimes we'd meet with Wyatt Earp
Cause he was a friend of ours
We'd clean up towns, fight Indian wars
And watch the buffalo roam
And our tails would be a'draggin
When we finally headed home

We'd get up in the morning
And we'd head down to the creek
Shed our clothes and jump right in
Let the fishes bite our feet
We'd drag the alligators out
By pulling on their tails
We'd stomp their heads and
Leave them bruised and bloody on the trail

Yea, we was tough,
No doubt about it
Weren't a man alive or a beast around
That could give us half a fight
Cause we was tough
And respected
The good folks loved us dearly, but
The crooks all hated our guts

Down the creek, at the sorghum hole
Is where the pirate ships would come
They'd raid and pillage the nearby towns

And steal kids from their homes
Blackbeard was their captains name
He was vicious, through and through
But his heart would turn to jelly
When he'd think of me and Lew

We'd wait for him in ambush
When he'd come back from the town
We'd whip his men and tie 'em up
Then we'd run Blackbeard down
We'd catch him just as he was about
To get on board his ship
And he would start to tremble
At the thought of getting whipped

Me and Lew would flip a coin
To see who'd get him first
It didn't make much difference
Cause both of us was tough
We'd knock him down, twist his legs
And bust him in the face
And he'd know he'd had a beatin'
When we finally let him lay

Yea, we was tough
No doubt about it
Weren't a man alive or a beast around
That could give us half a fight
Cause we was tough
And respected
The good folks loved us dearly, but
The crooks all hated our guts

Well, that went on for several years
Till we were about thirteen
That was when we realized
That, girls looked good in jeans
Our entire line of thinking changed
It seemed we'd been all wrong
Those day were so confusing
Cause we'd been tough for so long

One day while we was walking
Down the road, shooting the breeze
We ran into a couple of girls
And they were wearing jeans
Their hair was long and silky
They were beautiful to see
Their britches legs were rolled up
They was wading in the creek

We smiled at them and they smiled back
Then one began to speak
She said, we don't like fighters
We like peaceful folk, you see
We know your reputation
How your' fighting all the time
So just keep on a'walking
Cause we won't give you the time

Ma'am, we ain't tough, no, we are lovers
Why, listening to little birdies sing
Is what we like to do
When the sun goes down and the crickets chirp
Our hearts just leap for joy
And, if you'll go walking with us
You'll find out we're gentle boys

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C R Clark

My Granddad's Porch

My Granddads porch was awesome
Though really quite austere
A place where neighbors sat and talked
Most any time of year
A place that's in my memory
From a better time, I'm sure
I don't recall great happenings
But I always felt secure
We'd sit there in the morning
Watch the cars and trucks go by
And every neighbor, as they passed
Would throw their hand up high
After supper in the evening
To the porch we would retire
And watch a brilliant sunset
Form a watercolor sky
The tree frogs and the crickets
Would croon their soothing trill
But my favorite sound of evening
Was the call of the whippoorwill
We'd go to bed quite early
I'd sleep soundly through the night
And wake to the aroma
Of breakfast cooking at sunrise
As I think back upon this time
I often mellow out
And wonder why it takes so long
To learn what really counts
I would truly love to go back
And relive this one more time
But the only way I've found, that works
Is to live it in my mind

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C R Clark

Natural Love Divine

Enveloped in a burning glow
By loves tenderest embrace
Passion's blissful rendezvous
Nature's lovely face

Natural love, ordained of God
In holy union as sublime
Man and wife as one become
As Church and Son divine

C R Clark

Ode To Baldness

Heads that shine are "oh so fine"
And mostly trouble free
No hair to fly when wind is high
They're always slick and neat

No hairspray or Brylcreem to buy
No brushes or pocket combs
And many ladies, I've heard it said,
Are fond of the old chrome dome

That must be why so many these days
Full heads of hair will shave
But, you can't shave hair that isn't there
I got mine the natural way

Now, you men of poetic métier
Whose hair has taken leave
Just write a verse if you'd care to link
With the bald headed poets' league

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C R Clark

Ode To My Wife

In a world of many wonders
I ne'er expect to see
A lass who'll hold my fancy
As bountifully as thee

You came to me in springtime
And now it's nearing fall
Our autumn time together
Should be the best of all

The little ones are grown now
With young ones of their own
And even those are at the age
To be out on their own

One day there'll be a new crop
Of wee ones coming on
They'll bring their hugs and kisses
To "Great" Memaw and Pepaw

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C R Clark

Odie Bought The Farm

Odie bought the farm today
Now we can be at ease
No more to be awakened
By his odorous release

James Robert cried when Odie left
Gigantic tears of glee
And even Fatso joined the mirth
As Odie left the scene

The air is so much cleaner now
And life is better far
For all of us here on the hill
Since Odie bought the farm

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C R Clark

Old Dobber

Old Dobber wandered in one day
Don't know, from whence, he came
He wore a ragged collar
But it didn't bear a name
We all began to feed him
So he gladly stayed around
We watched the paper every day
And read the lost and found
It was strange no one was looking
For a dog that could shake hands
A dog, that if you asked him too
Would roll over and play dead
But, it seemed he chose to stay here
It is here he's made his bed
I guess he's found a home with us
So we'll try to keep him fed

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C R Clark

Perfect Camo (Haiku)

New fawn lay so still
A coyote passing nearby
Never had a clue

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C R Clark

Ph, To Me

When I joined the ranks of poets
At PH a few months hence
I found a group of people
Whom I now consider friends

Though, as a poet, I suspect,
I'll ne'er be thought renowned
Still I love to show my work
Where it's seen the world around

This site has been a boon to me,
Writing more than I used to,
And I think, by reading other bards
My own work's been improved

I see this site as a privilege
And, one not to be abused
When angry tensions oft arise
It leaves me quite confused

Each item I submit in verse
Though meaningful to me
I suspect that, not, to all who read
Twill be their cup of tea

At times, much better poets
Than I, their work, submit
And even though, I know it's great
I just can't "get into" it

But if, alas, I take offense
At values, different than my own
I, simply, note the poet's name
Click the mouse and move along

If a rude and contentious poet
Should offend enough, on site
Their work, no longer, would be read
Which would be their ultimate price

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C R Clark

Poetry

Poetry is the thoughts I have
I write them down for all to see
Some will like them, some will not
But, they all hold some import for me
The subject may be love or sports
Pitching woo or riding a horse
Or about hunting or fishing with worms
Or, just, some silly, rhyming verse
It may be truth, it may be tale
It may be true for someone else
But, written as if it were about me
It's not a lie, its poetry

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C R Clark

Quick Retorts

Very often, when I've been in a group
Of folks who enjoy making smart remarks
Not for maliciousness, it's all in fun
But, still, one needs a quick retort

For me, I'll usually think of one
'Bout fifteen minutes after everyone's gone
And wonder "now why didn't I say that"
But, by then, it's too late, they've already gone

This one old boy that I'm around a lot
Seems always ready with a smart remark
It's not very often he ever gets stopped
But, one got him good with a quick retort

It was when this fellow comes back to work
From his honeymoon with a great big grin
Old "Smarty" got 'em cornered in the crowd and asked
"How many times on your first night, friend?"

Now, the boy's face turned strawberry red
And old "Smarty" figured, he'd gave him a start
But once he got over the initial jolt
He said "two times, Smarty" and he stuck his chest out

Old "Smarty" reared back and said, "on my wedding night,
Me and my wife, twelve times, we went at it"
The boy, straight faced, and without hesitation
Said, "well, I reckon my wife just wasn't used to it"

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C R Clark

Retirement

At last, it's here
Long awaited, anticipated
Dreamed about and planned for
And so meets two opposing emotions
Elation in the joy of the moment
And trepidation in the idea
Of, suddenly, being
Unemployed

© C R Clark 5/20/2008

C R Clark

Salvation Is Forever

If any sin could be great enough
To cause one to fall from grace
Nobody, but God, would be in Heaven
They'd all be in the other place

Salvation that will not cover your sin
Has a value that's very small
If you could live your life without any sin
You would need no Salvation at all

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C R Clark

Seems Natural To Me To Be Drawn To The Wild

Seems natural to me to be drawn to the wild
To get high on breathing the crystal clean air
To soar with the hawk in the clear azure sky
Or to fish in the stream with the wild grizzly bear

The wapiti grazes the verdant hillside
At home and at ease in the thin mountain air
And, has never so much as, wished on a star
To be anywhere else, in the world, but up there

And down in the valley the antelope roam
And feed on the fruits of the green, grassy lea
The Seal, the Walrus, the Penguin, and Whale
Are at home in the chill of the cold arctic sea

And down in the Amazon jungle's midst
There, primitive people, in nature, survive
They live all their lives in their rain forest home
Depending on, just, what the forest provides

Though I'm not equipped to live life as these do
In my mind I can travel and go where I please
I can run with the caribou, swim with the whale
And swing on the vines in the Amazon's trees

It seems natural to me to be drawn to the wild
To treasure the bounty that nature provides
To appreciate beauty, wherever it breathes
And savor how nature seasons our lives

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C R Clark

Shaking The Boat

It was in the summer of '79
Our reels were loaded with brand new line
Me and Clarence and my "cotton top" son
Went out on the lake to have some fun
Now, the Conway Lake is full of stumps
When you go through the water, there's lots of bumps
Sometimes you hang up and there's nothing to do
But, start shaking the boat till you finally get loose
We had just started out toward the middle of the lake
When we veered to the left and got out of the lane
Then, sure enough we ran up on a stump
And there we sat, on the stump, we were stuck
Grabbing the sides of the boat, I said
Hold onto your hats and don't lose your heads
Having said that, I started shaking the boat
I wasn't worried, I knew it would float
But, my crew turned pale and started to sing
Have you gone crazy? You'll cause us to sink
It's the only way, I said, with a grin
Once we get loose, we can cast off again
We shook and we grunted, we moaned and we groaned
And we finally got loose from the stump we were on
I started the motor and we pattered away
Hoping no one had seen us shaking that way
We hadn't gone far till we started to cast
After awhile the crew's color came back
We cast and we reeled but the fish wouldn't bite
We took a vote and decided to try a new site
A "fishy" looking spot toward the opposite shore
But about half way there, a stump, we ran over
We were hung up solid out there in the lake
So we all grabbed the boat and started to shake
This time the crew took it all in stride
And when we shook loose, they both smiled with pride
So we motored on over to the spot we had seen
And anchored the boat; the fishing looked "mean"
We cast and we cranked till our arms were give out
Then we finally declared "this place is fished out"
Our success with the fish didn't get any better

But at finding them stumps, there ain't any greater
Than me and Clarence and my "cotton top" Son
We hung up on a hundred, if we hung up on one
When we finally decided we'd had enough
I started the motor and we started to putt
Across the lake, going back to the truck
The crew was stationed to watch for stumps
The Son in the middle and Clarence in front
By now, they were used to shaking off stumps
When they saw one coming, they weren't bothered much
When one would appear, they would grab hold and shake
But, to me, in advance, not a word would they say
They'd shake to the left and shake to the right
And I had to hold on with all of my might
They'd have shaken me out of the boat, I admit
If we hadn't got back to the dock when we did
For a better day, we could never have wished
Success is not measured by number of fish
Time spent with family is worth any cost
The memories of this trip will never be lost

Copyright C R Clark-6/10/81

C R Clark

Simpler Times

In simpler times, before the birth
Of Play Station, Nintendo, and Wii
Before Microsoft or the internet
When TV was just for the wealthy few
As children, playing near the creek
We could while the hours away
With two empty pork and bean cans
And a puddle, teeming with polliwogs
And we were truly entertained

©C R Clark-6/29/2008

C R Clark

Smiling Eyes

Smiling Eyes
Looking up at me,
From the face of a thirty eight inch boy
Touching me
With magic, only love can comprehend
Questioning
And stirring mixed emotions in my soul
Can I teach him
All the things he needs to know
Or will I fail
And will he love me
Just as much when he grows up
As he does now
But, I know when I look into those smiling eyes
They don't comprehend the meaning
In the words I have to say
But, I hope, they realize
How much I love those smiling eyes

Copyright C R Clark-June 28,1981

C R Clark

Solitude

In the autumn forest,
Hushed, serene
I tread
A dim, meandering trail,
Absorbed
In contemplative mood,
And devour
The very soul of nature
Blessed, peaceful
Solitude

Copyright C R Clark-3/5/2008

C R Clark

Springtime Meadow

Downey, glistening petals
Quiver in springs faint breeze
Borne high by slender shafts
Of emerald hue
As I survey
This once common meadow
I am awed
By it's springtime beauty
A magnificent blanket of daffodils
Within this flaxen host
A new colt at his mother's side
Attempts to follow
As she slowly moves away
But, his wobbly legs give way
And he falls
He rests there for a while
Sheltered
In this golden sea

Copyright C R Clark-3/22/82

C R Clark

Springtime's Coming

Everything is turning green
Spring is just around the bend
Birds are singing everywhere
And Sonya's got a cold

There's a red bird on the patio
Sun's a' shining, clouds'll have to go
Cat's a' sneaking through the underbrush
And Joker colored a shoe

Yes Springtime's coming
With all of it's irony
Sunshine and common colds
Flu bugs and swimming holes
Springtime's coming
With picnic's and tornadoes
Sunburns and fishing poles
Won't you hurry up Spring

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C R Clark

Success

Success is measured,
Not by wealth
Nor by position or fame
And not by power
Or pride in self
And not by size of gain,
It's being truly happy
with what you have
Whatever that may be
Success is being
content, with God
as the center of your family

Copyright C R Clark-July 4,1981

C R Clark

Switches, Pop, And Persimmon Rockets

I remember, well, that tall old persimmon
That stood in the yard, when I was a lad
The soft fruit that fell from that tall old persimmon
When picked up and eaten, what sweetness, it had

It didn't take long to eat up all the ripe ones
And then what was left laying under the tree
Was firm, shiny fruit that resembled green apples
And it seemed it should also be tasty, to me

I picked up a big one and brushed off the dirt
Then sunk my teeth in its flesh, firm and green
My mouth puckered up like a prune in the sun
I found that persimmons aren't tasty when green

My brothers and I and the neighbors as well
Would play in its shade most all the day long
Softball or horseshoes or cowboys and Indians
It didn't much matter 'cause life was a song

Since no one could eat those hard green persimmons
We wondered if use for such fruit could be found
While playing one day, through a sheer stroke of genius
A discovery was made of gargantuan bounds

Right there on the ground we made our discovery
A single use switch that my pop made me cut
And once he had finished the job it was cut for
He dropped it right there where I, then picked it up

It seemed, such a waste, to get only one use
From such a fine switch as this one I had cut
So, onto its tip I pushed one green persimmon
And reared back and flung it as hard as I could

We couldn't believe how smoothly it flew
Up through the trees and over the fence
It bounced off the roof of the house on the next street
We all were astounded, how far that it went

A new sport was born that glorious day
Contests were held and a champion was named
We bounced more'n a dozen hard green persimmons
Off of that rooftop the very first day

One day when that neighbor should've been working
He found green persimmons all over his lot
He studied awhile on the puzzle before him
Then, as fate would have it, he called up my pop

It didn't take pop long to figure it out
When he found all our ordnance piled in the ditch
Since I was the oldest, he called me in first
And told me, "young man, go cut me a switch"

I cut you a good one, I said to my pop
But, I feel I must say, as I give it to you
For a switch of this nature, it seems a disgrace
To be wantonly put to such vulgar a use

© C R Clark-6/15/2008

C R Clark

Testimony

In the early hours of morning, I was driving around the town
Going nowhere special, just couldn't make myself lay down
My mind was deep in turmoil such, as I had never known
I'd made a mess of everything my self-esteem was gone

I had never felt this low before, tormented in my soul
By my own guilt and other things that were out of my control
It seemed I had a heavy weight intent to drag me down
If I could not, soon, free myself I knew I'd surely drown

Long ago I'd trusted Jesus and I knew he loved me still
But, I had strayed so very long and lived outside his will
That I couldn't feel his presence, even though I knew
That he was always by my side and desired to see me through

I pulled into the parking lot of the church where I attend
Went inside, sat down in back, in the dark, and searched within
I don't know how long I sat there and considered my sorry state
But somewhere along the way, I felt myself begin to pray

I confessed that I had let him down, dishonored his special gift
And the heavy price I was paying now, was my own fault, not his
I began to feel his presence all around me in the room
The love and strength he offered, that night, saved my life from doom

I said, Lord, this load I'm under seems more than I can bear
And, even though I don't deserve it, it is my earnest prayer
For strength, to help me bear it, as you've promised in your word
And by your grace, to live my life, with reverence for you, Lord

Just then, my Lord took pity on this sinner, saved by grace
I felt his glorious power begin to heal my wretched state
I could feel the burden lifting and, while his spirit filled my soul,
It departed from my body, left me feeling clean and whole

When I left the church that morning, I was singing in my mind
Relieved of all my burdens, I had left their weight behind
And I say to all who struggle with heavy burdens in their life
You may find relief, as I did, through faith in Jesus Christ

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C R Clark

The Assault On The Innocents

The "She beast" lay silent
As the innocents drew near
Her talons were honed
Her heart knew no fear
Her gigantic beak
Was sharpened and red
From the blood of the victims
On which she had fed
I'll kill these intruders
This vile beast would say
I'll kill them right now
Or, I'll scare them away
Then, she swooped from her perch
To begin her attack
And dove at the innocents
As they happily passed
She lunged at their heads
She lunged at their backs
Till the innocents were harried
From her endless attacks
Then one of the innocents
Called for the Chief
To come and do battle
With this terrible beast
The Chief came with armor
And weapons of wood
And battled the beast
As only he could
The beast, then defeated
Returned to her lair
To bury her head
In shame and despair
The "Chief" beat his chest
As the battle was done
The victory was his
He, surely, had won
The people rejoiced
As the innocents returned
To their own "cubby holes"

Safe and secure

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C R Clark

The Campfire

The Aura of the campfire
Is magical indeed
As friends encircled in the glow
Recount their daily deeds

A day's hunt now behind us
We gather in this place
To extend the day's adventures
As we rally around the flames

Laughter rings out through the night
As stories there are told
The magic of the campfire
Is loved by young and old

The embers glow and warm us
As the stories often do
Friendships that are nurtured there
Will last a lifetime through

This is the "stuff" of memories
Made when friends unite
And share these golden moments
That are treasured throughout life

Memories shared around the fire
Fresh life is breathed into
As we pass them on to others
They return to us anew

Fellowship, friends and laughter
Are things that we all need
Yes, the Aura of the campfire
Is magical indeed

C R Clark

The Dark Horse Is Joe T

It's the first of September at the Bar of ranch, the Sun's just startin to rise
Joe T's stirring, gotta feed the stock, be a race to be run after while

The horses are tethered down at the crick, he'll take `em some oats and hay
Gotta keep `em happy cause, in a spell, he expects `em to win a race

By the time Joe T's got the horses fed, Miss Sondra's got vittles on
She says "come on Joe, it's might near ready, the coffee's already done

After "grub, " he checks, on the horses shoes, makes sure they're all real tight
Checks out the wagon and tack and stuff and visits with cowboys that happen by

Later on he gets the wagon tarp out and laces it up good and tight
The wagon itself is John Deere green and the tarp on top is black

On the side of the tarp, in big yeller letters, the name of the team is spelled out
With the wagon out front, it's apparent to all that this here's the "Dark Horse"
camp

'Fore noon he saddles 'Old Rooster" up and rides off around the track
Meets up and visits with more cowboys, catches up on the latest Bar of facts

When him and rooster get back to camp it's time to get the team hooked up
There's a good deal of pain in Joe T's knees but he'll just "cowboy up"

"Frat Rat" and "Super" get all excited when they see Joe T coming in
They know it's "might near" time for the race and they "shore nuff" like to win

A little later on, down at the track, the parade's just finishing up
The teams are getting nervous, ready to run, the first heat's lining up

Now a chuckwagon team has three that run an outrider, driver and cook
The cook's gotta throw the bedroll in back and then he climbs on up

He talks to the driver, as the race is run, and tells him what's going on
Where the outrider's at, who's catching up, does he need to slow down, or go on

Now the outrider's gotta throw the "cookstove" in then he springs up on his
mount

He's gotta pass his wagon and finish first or their time aint gonna count

There's the shot; they're startin to move, the cook's up behind the seat
Around the barrel, they've got lined out, they're startin to pick up speed

The outrider's mounted; he's closin fast, There don't seem to be any doubt
He'll pass `em up by the second curve so, Joe T's windin `em out

Heeyaaa, heeyaaa, go "Frat, " go "Sup, " git on around this track
The cook says " Joe, the Outlaw Gang's comin up on the right, real fast"

As they're comin up on the second curve, the wagons are two abreast
The Dark Horse and The Outlaw Gang, what a race, what a tight contest

They disappear in a dusty fog as they're comin around the curve
Heeyaaa, heeyaaa, both drivers shout, as they head for the last big turn

After they round that final barrel, they're ready to stretch `em out
Heeyaaa, heeyaaa, go "Frat" go "Sup, " The Dark Horse is pullin out

As they're closin in on the finish line the teams are nose and nose
"Frat" and "Sup" give it all they've got and they win, but it's mighty close

Joe T brings the team back around, In front of the spectator stands
It's the same thing he always does, of course, but since they won, it's a victory
dance

There's a lot of shouts from the Dark Horse fans as the team heads back to camp
Gotta feed the horses and let `em rest, It'll start all over when the sun comes up

The Dark Horse team's been around for years, but the members have sometimes
changed

Outriders and cooks have come and gone, but the driver's been the same

New members will always come and go, I `spect that's the way it'll be,
But the driver will always be the same, `cause the Dark Horse is Joe T

Copyright by CR. Clark-4/2/07

C R Clark

The Demon's Embrace

The demon cajoles
Sanity ends
Its hold, abhorrent
Wicked as sin
Altering thoughts
Confusing the mind
Feeding depression
The victim is blind
To reason, logic,
Clever advice
And with sad imperceptions
Evil imbibes
He utters profanities
Threatens and rails
Promises vengeance
On any who'd fail
To show the respect
He believes he is due
Or question his motives,
Judgment, or truth
Then, weeping, brooding,
Tortured, dismayed
The demon delights
In this wretched display
The misery continues
As long as his strength
With the demon inciting,
Prodding at length
Till exhausted, the victim
In stupor's release
Unconsciousness, mercifully
Eases the grief
The demon retreats
As there's no other route
And waits, patient, until
The next bottle's uncapped

© C R Clark-5/26/2008

The House On Centerville Road

We stopped beside the highway
And gazed at the old house
I told my wife, "That's where I lived"
When I was just a little sprout
It looked smaller than it once did
Back so many years ago
Even then it was old and creaky
But, as a kid, I didn't know
Weathered boards were loose and falling
Saplings grew up through the porch
The old tin roof was rusted orange
And the yard looked like a forest
Here dwells my oldest memories
From so many years ago
When our young family lived here
In the house on Centerville road

Those walls once rang with laughter
And the energy of two young lads
Riding stick horses all around the place
Trying to "herd" our collie, Pat
But, Pat knew more than we did
When she'd hear Mama shout
She'd turn us back from the road
And herd two boys toward the house
Dad got a job and we moved to town
Well before I started school
So, my memories are short and sketchy
But, I've found there are quite a few
My wife retrieved her camera
And as I turned the key to go
Snapped a picture from her window
Of the house on Centerville road

10/07/07

C R Clark

The Hunt

As I ascend the oak
And find my place among its boughs
This day has yet to see the sun
And it's luminescent rays
The dark, the solitude of night,
The beating of my heart in
Hope's anticipation
Stirs a fervor in my soul
The frosty breath of autumn air
Enlivens me
My spirit soars
A coyote calls, a chase begins
Reliving nature's way
Then, sudden stillness tells the tale
Of predator and prey
At last, light pierces darkened space
And dances on the forest floor
To the rhythm of branches,
Swaying in the breeze
And, the forest comes alive
With songbird calls
And crows, so close, I hear
The "whoosh" from flapping wings
The "rustle" in fallen leaves,
The familiar chatter of a squirrel
And I, perched high above this scene
Am silent, as I watch and wait
I have been ordained
A player, in this primal drama
My presence here is natural
As is, that of the puma
As he lies in wait to seize his prey
I am "drinking in" the nectar
Of the bounty God supplies
As I savor every second
In these splendid nature halls
And in this wondrous moment
I am thankful for this gift,
For my inherent right to be here

And this great tradition claim
So if, by chance, as at other times,
There will be no score today
My plate, indeed, was full
I have feasted on the main course
More, would surely be dessert

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C R Clark

The Monarch

'Twas a cold November morning from my platform on a pine
I noticed through the tangled woods a moving, horizontal line
The line became a shadow as it moved into the light
Then, at last, it took a form as it flicked a tail of white

'Twas a monarch of the forest out to make his duteous rounds
To seek and offer service to any maidens that he found
Majestic in appearance in the woods so dimly lit
He was nothing short of awesome as he stepped out in the field

He was highly silhouetted against the latent, hoary heath
And steam puffed from his nostrils like a locomotive's breath
His rack was tall and handsome his neck a massive swell
As he foraged in the frosty lea, mighty antlers touched the dell

Each step he took was measured as he read the neighborhood
And his acumen rewarded as a form before him stood
'Twas a maiden of the woodland with compliant attitude
So he uttered his intentions and a rendezvous ensued

He got right down to business and in a moment it was done
His service had been rendered the maiden had been won
He pawed the ground and grunted as the maiden moved along
He hooked a limb and left his scent, then cautiously moved on

As he continued on his course he was coming near my tree
As I began to draw my bow his eyes came straight to me
It took him just an instant to know something was amiss
His flag went up and he was gone, my golden chance was missed

Even so, that day was special
For nature opened up her arms
And revealed to me, her very soul
And embraced me in her warmth

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The Times They'Re Always Changing

I've always loved the woodlands
Even when I was a boy
To hunt and fish and camp out
Would bring me endless joy

The grownups went to deer camp
It seemed the time would never come
When I was old enough to go
And be trusted with a gun

But, when the time had finally come
In an instant I was hooked
The camping and the hunting
I could never get enough

Then, on through my teenage years
My fever just got worse
From dawn till dusk out on my stand
Or stalking through the woods

The grownups started "wimping out"
After only a few days
I'd tease and shame them as they left
But, I was going to stay

It went on like that for quite a spell
I would often hunt alone
Our camp was big for a little while
Then most of them went home

Then when I was in my twenties
I met this "pretty thing"
We were married in the autumn
Just before deer season came

I told her how I loved to hunt
She said that would be all right
But when I left her at the door
My throat felt kinda tight

That year we had a bigger camp
Kinfolk came from near and far
Dad had bragged about my prowess
How I'd hunted long and hard

I sat my stand quite early
Well before daylight
Then suddenly it occurred to me
"I can't stay out here tonight"

My "sweet thing's" waiting back at home
While I'm sitting in a tree
But, what'll I tell them back at camp
When they see I'm gonna leave

For all the past few years
I've shamed them without mercy
And told them "they were wimping out"
When they left the woods too early

I tried to think up an excuse
For going home that night
But, the more I tried, the more I knew
That bird weren't gonna fly

I'd just go back to camp early
And create a little smoke
They'd all still be out hunting
And I'd just leave a little note

But then when I got back to camp
Much to my surprise
Every one of them was there
Standing around the fire

Now what's the chance of that, I thought
As I was walking in
And then I noticed on every face
A silly, smirky grin

You're early son, my dad piped up

Didn't `spect you in till dark
I said well.....I....ah...I don't know
I ain't feeling none too smart

My uncle said "I can see it, boy
You're about to get the shakes
You best go get that purty girl
To put a cool rag on your face"

He said "Son, I know what's wrong with you
You're suff'rin from withdrawal
You best go home and get it fixed
You can try again tomorrow"

Then laughter burst out `round the fire
It sounded loud as thunder
Then I knew that I'd been had
I'd really made a blunder

As I drove off down the road
My windows rolled up tight
I could hear the "heehawing" back at camp
Till I got plumb out of sight

That day I learned a lesson
Now, I don't do much haranguing
'Cause, to paraphrase what Dylan said
The times they're always changing

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C R Clark

There's A Land God Has Promised Those That Serve Him

There's a land, God has promised those that serve him
And I know, one day, that land will be my home
I'll go there when my life on earth is finished
Lay my sorrows down and never more will roam
I'll be present with the Saints of all the ages
And I'll visit with my Savior every day
I'll be at peace with everyone in Heaven
Oh, I'd love to be there, Lord, with you today

God has told me in his word about this Heaven
He said the streets are paved with purest gold
There's riches there that cannot be imagined
And there's perfect, peaceful, joy for every soul
It's a place where sin and greed, no more, can tempt me
Where selfishness and lust cannot abide
I know that I do not deserve to go there
But, my Savior has already paid the price

I sometimes dream of following my Savior
Through the air, headed straight for Heaven's Gate
There are multitudes of joyous people with me
We've just been rescued from a world that's full of hate
We were caught up on the clouds to be with Jesus
In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye
As we draw nearer to the land that God has promised
My excitement's getting more than I can hide

There are angels standing round us everywhere, now
Singing glory, glory, glory to the Lord
All my life and all my sins are flashed before me
They are noted and forgiven one by one
As I'm standing in the presence of the Father
My mind is flooded with a peace I've never known
And suddenly I'm shouting with the angels
Singing glory, glory, glory to the Lord

As I said this is a dream I often think of

But, I know one day this dream will all come true
Because one day I gave my heart to Jesus
He forgave me and He cleansed me through and through
It was at this time He sealed a promise to me
He said I go now to prepare for you a place
And I will come again and take you with me
And you will live with me in glory for always

So my friends if you've not made your reservation
If you've not accepted Jesus for your own
If you don't know the joy that God can give you
If you're wandering in your sin all alone
Just give your heart to Christ and ask forgiveness
For all your sin, one time, he did atone
And He will give you life everlasting
Then you'll look forward to the day he'll take you home.

Yes, there's a land God has promised those that serve him
And I know, one day that land will be my home
I'll go there when my life on earth is finished
Lay my sorrows down and never more will roam
I'll be present with the saints of all the ages
And I'll visit with my Savior every day
I'll be at peace with everyone in Heaven
Oh, I'd love to be there, Lord, with you today

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C R Clark

Thunder Rolz (Haiku)

Cousins sleeping sound
In the hay in Grandpa's barn
Snug, as thunder rolz

Copyright C R Clark-3/14/2008

C R Clark

Tornado

On February 5,2008 a tornado ravaged Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Alabama, leaving 59 people dead

Like a torrent, it came crashing, smashing everything it met
Breaking trees and moving buildings, anything `twas in its path
And it came so quick that many scarce had time to get away
From the vicious, killer wind that left destruction in its wake

Those who heard it said it thundered like a freight train or a jet
And the sound reverberated like eruptions in their head
Giant trees were snapped and tossed, as if they only were a match
And many buildings just exploded when engulfed within its swath

Many city blocks were leveled as it moved from state to state
Many families were uprooted as their homes were blown away
More than a dozen lives were taken here in Arkansas alone
Nearly sixty by the time that its intensity was gone

Interviews with victims on the next day's news report
Showed people who'd been spared and giving glory to the Lord
Though their homes and all belongings were strewn all over space
God protected the important things, all else could be replaced

For those whose lives were lost, there are many filled with grief
And it will take some time before their families feel relief
But, for those who knew the Lord, I know they're resting well today
And if they had a chance to come back, they all would choose to stay

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C R Clark

Tranquility

A gentle breeze wafts across the lake
As I relax beside the fire
My thoughts abate to non awareness
And I am engulfed in tranquility

Copyright C R Clark-12/25/07

C R Clark

We Valentines

To my wife of 33 years

If you will be my valentine
I'll do for you things "oh so fine"
I'll take you to the woods with me
And teach you how to "sit a tree"
And watch for game, down on the trail
And, with an arrow, it, impale
Ill teach you how to "gut" your kill
And cook it on a spit
Then, you can help me tan the hide
And make a blanket out of it
I'll teach you how to make a fire
With only sticks and grass
And then, I'm sure that you'll agree,
The best, I've saved for last
When supper's through and we're rested up
To the creek we'll go "a trippin"
And, there, in the woods, we valentines
Will go in "skinny dippin"

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C R Clark

Winona

Winona is a wildlife management area in the
Ouachita mountains of Arkansas

Winona wakes in springtime, cheerful, with a bent preen
Her winter ravaged skin reveals new raiment, fresh and green
She takes a grand and sober breath then readies for the task
To be, again, the very best that anyone could ask

She was wounded in the great ice storm of many years ago
Her scars stand as a portent, nature's healing can be slow
But, when one is scarred by nature, then nature will restore
And the scarred is often stronger, even better than before

She summons me each autumn with her promise of respite
And never has she failed to elevate a wearied mind
She's intensely empathetic with those who come her way
She relieves the dull, prosaic grind and the stress of everyday

In the early morning darkness she has drawn me deep within
Then held me in her bosom as a bright new day began
I have sat with her around the fire, known her hospitality

Then, slept in pure contentment as her warmth surrounded me

In the desert of this daily life, an oasis one may find
She stands apart like Shangri La, a Utopia of kind
Her call goes out each autumn, patrons come from near and far
For renewal of their spirit to Winona of the Ouachitas

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C R Clark

Worry

Worry is a loathsome thing
It never pays it's due
It bends and crumples the lonely mind
And ends with nothing new

Copyright C R Clark-7/4/81

C R Clark

You Don't Know If You'll Have Tomorrow

This was originally written as a song

You don't know if, you'll have tomorrow
Or even if you'll have tonight
All you know that you have for certain
Is right now, my friend, right now
God is calling, Satan's tempting
Life or death is what's at stake
You can't ignore it, you must act on it
This decision will be made

The preacher just stepped down from the pulpit
The invitation has begun
As I stand here my body is trembling
My face is flushed, my hands are numb
The Holy Spirit's working on my soul now
Like he's done so many times
My heart is beating wilder all the time now
As the preacher's words keep running through my mind

You don't know if you'll have tomorrow
Or even if you'll have tonight
All you know that you have for certain
Is right now, my friend right now
God is calling, Satan's tempting
Life or death is what's at stake
You can't ignore it, you must act on it
This decision will be made

I just asked the Lord to forgive me
And to cleanse my heart today
I feel a holy warmth all around me
And the prayers of every saint in the place
My heart is full of joy, I received him
Tears have begun to fill my eyes
One second I was standing here in silence
But now, my feet are running down the aisle

You don't know if you'll have tomorrow

Or even if you'll have tonight
All you know that, you have for certain
Is right now, my friend, right now
God is calling, Satan's tempting
Life or death is what's at stake
You can't ignore it, you must act on it
This decision will be made

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