

Poetry Series

**Clyde King**  
**- poems -**

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## Clyde King(January 8,1952)

I was born at Randolph Air Force base near San Antonio, Texas,1952. My father was a pilot for the Air Force and left a month after I was born and was killed a year later in the "forgotten war" that killed over 55,000 US soldiers plus allies. I was raised by a single mother, who is the finest person I've ever known. She gave me the love for good literature, especially poetry, and William Shakespeare's poems and plays, "Macbeth" and "Hamlet" being among them, and his great sonnets. Sonnet 29 is my favorite. I'm also a visual artist and all of the illustrations with my poems I've produced. Thank you, dear readers, for taking a few minutes in your busy lives, to read mine. I hope you find something valuable in them.

# 'possum Charlie

My name is Charlie Smith,  
But my friends call me 'Possum Charlie.  
I never asked why but I 'spect  
It's cuz of my mouth  
Full of pointy chiclet teeth,  
Wiry head of hair,  
And my overbite.

I'm glad I don't have a tail like  
A 'Possum. "Possum, " they'd say,  
"why you so ugly? You oughta  
Have a hairless tail like  
A 'Possum to go 'long with  
That ugly face."

As I said, I'm glad I don't  
As that could be embarassin' too.

I've got a scar just above  
My butt hole. My older brother  
Ray says it's cuz I was born  
With a tail, and the doctor cut it off  
Like they do some dogs.

Havin' a tail might not  
Be so bad if you held it up  
Like a dog so's nobody  
Could step on it,  
Or a car or rockin' chair  
Could run over it.

Yes siree, it'd be a real  
Conversation sparker for me,  
And I wouldn't be ugly 'Possum  
Charlie anymore! In fact,  
My name might git famous 'n  
People'd pay good money  
To see me whip it out  
The backside of my pants

Or pull it `tween my legs  
Like I had...well, you know.

Anyways, I feel like life  
Has played a cruel trick  
On me but I don't care.  
At least people know me  
In this ole one-horse town.  
I'm `Possum Charlie!

Nov.2020

Clyde King

# A Great Soul

As I was meandering along Walmart's  
Scientifically arranged aisles  
To suck more money  
Out of suckers like me,  
A young salesman trying to sell  
Cell phone, WiFi, and internet  
Service, approached me courteously  
Asking if I had a current cell phone,  
WiFi and internet service.

I replied, "yes, and it's with  
The company you're working for."  
Nonplussed, he continued talking  
Non-stop until I  
Stopped him, but politely.  
And reminded him that  
I was already a loyal customer.  
He stopped talking, noticing  
For the first time that  
I was a real person too.  
And that I was now talking  
To him in mild, measured words.

He paused, looked at my  
Black tee shirt that said in bold, white lettering  
"Gin & Juice." Tanqueray was printed on the sleeve.  
He and his cohort nodded approvingly  
At this cool reference to a rap song  
By rapper Snoop Dog  
And said approvingly  
"You're cool brother, you've got soul."

To which I replied.  
"Yes, and a great one, too, "

October2020

Clyde King

# A Memory

My dead wife travels with me  
wherever I go. I'm never alone.  
In life it was the same. When she could  
not go with me, she bided  
her time, uneasy, restless,  
until I returned.

She prided herself with her  
organizing and packing skills.  
Not only these, she would  
pick out my business suits,  
shirts and ties. She made sure  
that I would look good. She  
folded each garment as if  
it were made of gold thread.

She showed her love for me,  
not in many words, but in  
loving acts, the acts of an  
intimate friend and lover.

Dec.2020

Clyde King

# Abstract

When I looked at the abstract  
Menagerie of colors  
I felt his pain

I've seen inside his  
World of darkness

From the sorrow of his heart  
And mind that seemed  
It would last an eternity of tomorrow's

His arched motionless body  
Gave him a scent of dark peace  
As he laid his head over  
His strong framed knees  
He looked to be praying

His soul was in need  
As I watched he slowly reached  
His tired yet artistic looking arm  
To that small space among the dark

As if he was calling it to come  
So he could look beyond

My soul has to mourn  
I heard him say in his silence  
And then after the grays  
And blacks and blues pass

My mind will renew  
With lights of the future  
And will come in pastels  
And strokes of happiness

June 2017

Clyde King

# Addiction

In 30 seconds or less  
Your eyes stop focusing  
You smell your own  
Rank sweat and breath.

Sweetly nauseous,  
Overpowering all other senses.  
Warmth rushes from your  
Stomach to your brain.

You feel the heat  
Slowly spreading through  
Your entire being.  
Everything starts glowing

With an unnatural brilliance.  
Your eyes, for a brief second,  
Become unblinking,  
Lost in this RUSH of

Bodily sensations.  
Your brain explodes  
With incoming mortars,  
You hear every sound,

Even those that aren't real.  
Every part of your body  
Vibrates, resonates,  
With this ineffable feeling.

You realize you can't  
Walk, talk, think, just lie  
On your bed staring  
At nothing.

You fall asleep, mercifully,  
Sleep, that balm, that  
Raveler of ragged sleeves,  
Let's you dream dreams,



See visions. You don't  
Know if you're dead or alive.  
Then the blackness hits your  
Brain, consciousness slips away.

Hours later, that seemed  
Like seconds, you wake up  
In your own vomit. It's smell  
Is fetid and bestial, your

Throat feels like you've  
Swallowed broken glass.  
Your breath is foul.  
Dried vomit decorates

Your face and clothes.  
You're too numb,  
Too sick to care anymore

Except getting  
Another fix.

August 2005

Clyde King

# Ain't

Am not

Are not

Is not

Just say AIN'T, dang it!

It's officially a word, you sot!

It's in the dictionary

No problem, thanks a lot

Clyde King

# All I Ever Wanted

All I ever wanted was to  
have you look at me and  
say, "How are you hon?  
How was your day?"

And talk. Talk about  
anything or nothing.  
I didn't care. But you  
were never much  
of a conversationalist.

It took two years  
for you to call me "Mike."  
Later, after we had children  
you'd call me daddy. That  
was progress.

You once told me you  
never saw your parents  
show love for each other.  
Then I understood why  
there were cold, distant spaces  
between us.

When you got Parkinson's  
and it's shadow dementia,  
all superficialities were  
stripped away. Your self  
came through and I think  
we got to know each  
other for the first time  
in 43 years. Why did it  
take so long? We missed  
so much together.

When you were sick  
we'd play peek-a-boo.  
I'd say "Boo! I see you"  
and you'd laugh. Your

grin and recognition  
of me flashed across  
your face for an instant  
and then it was gone.

We loved each other more  
in your last days than  
in the first. You dropped  
the defenses that protected  
you from an alcoholic parent.  
You became who you  
truly were.

If only...

Nov.2020

Clyde King

# Alone

I can't get used to  
Being used to  
Being alone,  
Know what I mean?

Wife dead nearly  
Three years now,  
Kids grown and gone.  
No grandkids either.

My immediate family  
Consists of a dog, Brooklyn,  
And two cats: Daisy Mae  
And Mickey Meowse.

My fur babies think  
I'm a Pez dispenser-  
Flip the lip  
And food comes out.

Oh well. I love them  
And they love me.  
They're nicer than  
A lot of people I know.

I wish I could teach them how  
To talk, read, and write,  
Like Robinson Crusoe  
Taught Friday.

Except Friday was human.

Nov.2020

Clyde King

# Anxiety

The dog is restless tonight  
and the cats won't settle down.  
I can't sleep and I feel  
like the night will last forever.

There's no food in the house  
and it's cold outside. My  
daughter Andrea is sick  
and spending a night  
or two in hospital. Second  
time in a month she's been  
hospitalized.

I'm afraid she may be  
heading for a major stroke.  
I couldn't bear seeing her  
speechless and crippled.

If one of my girls died  
before me I would die.  
They are all I live for.  
Without them my life  
would be over, done,  
adios amigo.

Dec.2020

Clyde King

# Bull Shit

I don't like being  
Bull shitted. Do you?

I hate bull shitters,  
Boasters, bigots,  
Most anything synonymous  
With ass hole.

There are plenty  
To go around. A shortage  
There will never be.

They procreate,  
Proliferate, prevaricate  
And goddamn aggravate!  
Even a moron would  
Refuse to associate.

Whatever, this  
Poem is not a poem,  
More like a rant `n rave  
About people who have  
The audacity, the capacity,  
To think they can bull shit  
Their way out of  
Everything...

And Bull Shit Me!

Nov.2020

Clyde King

# Chuck It

I'm going to give up trying.  
Living is harder than dying.

I'll say goodbye to friends and kin  
and say, "Chuck it, throw the towel in!"

I've lived three-score and nine,  
so I think it's about time.

To just let go and throw in my hat,  
to say, "I've had enough, that is that."

If there's something else, I'd love to know.  
Otherwise, let's end this show.

Life can get old and so can you.  
Let's bring the curtain down on this whoop-de-doo.

Clyde King



# Come Back

Where are you?  
Where did you go?  
We were friends, you know.  
We did everything together,  
Now I can't recall your name.  
I had no father  
So mine you became.  
Take my hand again.  
Tell me your name.  
Give me your power.  
Then you may go,  
Then you may go.

March 2017

Clyde King

# Conversations With A 'possum

Last night I talked with a 'Possum.  
He was dining in my garbage can,  
One of his favorite stops when he's in town.

His name is Frank and his wife  
Is Martha although I've never met her.  
He has a favorite garbage can in every  
Neighborhood. He likes mine because it's  
Usually full of chicken, steak, and  
Pork rib bones.

But I was getting fed up with his  
Nocturnal noshing, littering  
And nattering. Except for that  
Bullshit, he's pretty interesting for  
A 'Possum. He loves to read Nietzsche,  
Philosophy and Proust.

I asked him not to be such  
A nuisance, but he said,  
With just the right tone of irony  
In his high pitched, nasal  
'Possum way, "Things don't change,  
But by and by our wishes  
Change."

I told Frank I wished that  
He would take his Proustian  
Spouting and get the hell  
Out of my garbage cans.  
Nothing against Proust.

He looked hurt, as only 'Possums  
Can, hissed an unrepeatable oath.  
Then as he departed into  
The Stygian night, he hurled  
This Nietzschean nugget back  
At me: "Convictions are more dangerous  
Foes than lies! "

I had to agree.

Clyde King

# Death Came By

Death came by the other day.  
He said "forget all this  
And come away."

I pondered his words and asked him why?  
"Don't you know? You're going to die!"

Well, yes, I know that day will appear.  
Will it be today, next week, or maybe a year?

Nobody knows when they'll take their last breath.  
It's useless to worry about the day of your death.

It will come and go, and you'll be forgotten  
In year or so.

I told Mr. Death "you're wasting my time.  
Go away, don't bother me.  
I've got to finish this rhyme."

Sept.2020

Clyde King

# Depression: Letting Go

Letting go of this  
noon day demon isn't easy.  
I've tried for twenty years  
and it's still hanging around.

I've tried talk therapy  
and so many meds  
it would make your head  
spin, like mine.

Been listening to a good  
(I suppose)book about  
surrendering completely  
to one's negative feelings.

FEELINGS, not thoughts,  
because our thoughts create feelings  
and vice versa. By surrendering  
we lose our attachment

to negative feelings and  
stop feeding them more  
negative energy. Get it?  
I don't know, maybe.

Maybe by not resisting,  
but by cooperating with  
my depression I can  
exterminate it's hold

on my psyche. But I have to  
ask my demon "why do I  
want to be depressed? What's  
in it for me? "

Since most depression  
seems to be caused by  
a deep unhappiness,  
I'll start there.

Clyde King

# Don't Wait

You can start anywhere  
Don't ask permission  
Or you may follow  
Advice that kills your spirit

Don't wait for the words  
To come to you  
Just fling them out  
Like you're throwing  
Paint on that blank canvas

Or you're in a fist fight  
Get in the first punch  
Keep your chin down  
Keep on swinging  
Your soul depends on it

Let it happen  
Like breathing  
Like hearing  
Like seeing  
Do you have to think  
About these

Find the place  
In your heart  
That must say  
What you are

When that veil  
Of illusion lifts  
Swallow the manna  
That your soul finds  
Taste it's sweetness  
On your tongue

Let it fill your belly  
Let the ancient ruined  
Voices speak

Telling you to let go  
Of the lies you and others  
Have been told

Say I am still here  
You Sons-of-Bitches  
I am not who you say  
I am I am not looking  
For your approval

I am not waiting  
Any longer to have others write  
My story tell my legacy  
Hypnotize me with lies

No more will anyone  
Or anything determine  
My fate but me

Aug.2005

Clyde King



# Dreaming

When you stop dreaming  
You might as well die.

When you give up on your hopes  
And you don't even try,

Your whole life is a waste!  
It's nothing but a lie.

If you only exist  
You're taking up space.

Get the hell out  
Of the human race!

Or try renting out  
The space behind your face.

When you stop dreaming  
You might as well die.

Your whole life is a waste  
Because you didn't try!

So, go 'head on  
And let your ass fly!

Oct.2020

Clyde King

# Ear Wax

Ear wax is nothing  
but shit your brain  
spits out while you're asleep.  
And it does so without a peep.  
You feel this sticky  
reddish brown gob  
has dropped down your  
ear like an alien blob.

Its a waxy and ill defined  
bit of waste your brain  
has left behind.  
Your mama says  
to wash out your ears  
for years and years.

I suppose that's good  
to do to get rid of  
this nasty goo.  
Good thing they're not  
boogers or snot.  
Then you'd be pickin'  
your ears a lot,  
and not, instead,  
that two-holed  
proboscis  
in front of your head.

Nov.2020n

Clyde King

# Eat More Poetry

Poetry should be on  
The menu everyday.  
Why? Because it's  
High in protean!

Poetry builds healthy muscles,  
Nerve cells and tissue.  
Prose is full of carbs, fat,  
Sugar and issues.

But the worst side effect  
Of prose, in most places,  
It Is boring, boring, boring  
Fatality cases!

Of course, there's bad poetry,  
Let's make no bones.  
Bad poetry can give you kidney stones.  
And warts, flatulence, and baldness, too.

So, if bad poetry tempts you  
To the nugatory pursuit  
Of prose anew,  
Then run, don't walk to your  
Nearest bookstore.

And splurge away  
On volumes of forgotten lore  
And your mental and physical  
Health good poetry  
Shall restore.

July 2005

Clyde King

# Elegy For Raina

Your life ran down  
The shower stall drain.  
The blood that was left  
Was congealed in a blanket  
You wrapped yourself with.

You left no note  
Only blood, bone,  
And brain tissue,  
Splattered on the walls  
And ceiling. These bore  
Mute witness to the  
Life you took.

Why, Raina? Why?  
You were beautiful,  
Talented poet, a mother  
And wife. But the horrible  
Unspeakableness of  
Your childhood and the bipolar  
Disease that afflicted  
You became too painful  
For you.

You called me the night before.  
You told me you were  
Going to take your life.  
I didn't want to believe you.  
Oh God! Had I believed!

A friend and I volunteered  
To clean the scene. The carnage  
That a .38 can do to  
A head is beyond evil.

May God forgive me.  
I can't forgive myself.

June 2005

Clyde King

# Falling Backward

You know the feeling.  
That black dog has caught you  
He has crept up on you  
And knocks you down  
Into the void of nothing...

You're falling backward again  
And you can't break it.  
Depression is a black hole  
That makes you believe  
You'll never climb out of it.

Days, weeks, months,  
Even years pass by of  
Nothing but the wish  
That this pain would end.

The only thing that makes  
You want to live is that still,  
Quiet voice that whispers  
In your soul "live."

You find it hard to believe.  
Nobody cares about you  
Or wants to because they're  
Afraid if they look inside you  
They will see themselves.

Yesterday, today, tomorrow  
Mean nothing to you.  
Macbeth got it.  
When he was facing certain death  
And desiring it to come  
More quickly, he said  
"Tomorrow, and tomorrow,  
And tomorrow, creeps in  
This petty pace from day to day...  
Life is a tale told by an idiot,  
Full of sound and fury,

Signifying NOTHING.&quot;

I know what he means...

One day you start to wake up  
From this living, breathing nightmare.  
You start to care again.  
You want to live again.  
You have hit the bottom  
Of the depression hole.  
You're going to be ok.

Life, now and forever.  
Depression is hell.  
I have learned to  
Walk carefully on  
This earth and value  
The purpose of being alive-  
Praise God. Thank God.  
Love your neighbor as yourself.  
-Psalm 15

Clyde King

## For Amanda And Andrea (Haikus)

Amanda Marie  
Such lovable bitterness  
Appropriate name

Andrea Lea  
A womanly meadow  
Birdsong and Flower

Berry brown babies  
From Eve earth mother  
Children from the mountains

How lovely you are  
How precious you are to me  
My dark eyed daughters

May God safeguard your  
Going out and your  
Coming in forever

June 2005

Clyde King



# For My Beloved Jeanne

The arms that embraced me,  
That held our children,  
That washed and tenderly folded  
Our lives together like precious garments,  
Are gone.

I see you and I look for you  
Everywhere I go. Sometimes  
I see you in a dream, from the  
Corner of my eye, or hear your  
Voice in another room.

I loved your dry country wit,  
As dry as late summer grass.  
You were a modest, guileless  
Southern born and bred girl.  
There was a southern gentility  
About you that enchanted me-

With an unhypocritical charm,  
A soft voice, a gentle way...

I'm sorry I didn't get the chance  
To say good bye when you silently slipped  
Into that good night. The nurse woke me to  
Tell me you were gone.

How could you? How could you leave  
Me after 42 years? I'd known you longer  
Than anyone else. I'm alone and afraid  
Of shadows and things I don't understand.

I caressed your hand and face  
And kissed you for the last time  
In this life: this place of wrath, pain,  
And tears. You suffered far too much.

And I thank God that now you are asleep  
In his loving embrace. Jesus declared that his father

Is "the God of the living, not the dead";  
Because the dead are still alive in his memory,  
Awaiting His call to live again.  
And you will always be in mine.

You were my best friend.  
I didn't appreciate it at times. I miss your  
Wry comments on my grooming habits  
And color choices in clothing. I'd look like  
A clown in a patchwork suit if it weren't for you.  
I'm lost without you now.

We, together, raised two beautiful girls.  
You'd be proud of them. They miss you more  
Than words can say. Amanda Marie, our "lovable  
Bitterness, " and Andrea Lea, "a womanly meadow."  
Those names are no coincidence.

We said harsh and cruel things  
To each other. Please forgive me.  
I didn't mean any of it. And I forgive  
You for the cold, silent spaces that you put  
Between us. That silence tormented me more  
Than words.

You were always honest and faithful.  
You honoured our marriage vows in front of God  
And men. You made me a better man and I thank you.

When you died, part of me died too. When you love deeply,  
You hurt deeply. If you're not willing to die for the ones you love,  
Do you really love them? I'm thankful that I or our girls didn't die before you,  
Else you would not have borne the pain.

We had a wonderful life.  
I thank God you were my wife.

August 2018

Clyde King

# Gangster From Miami

We don't snort cheap cocaine in Miami  
We don't take our lives seriously  
We like to race our sports cars down on Main Street  
We like getting high and living free

We don't make a party out of nothing  
But we like shooting signs and saying boo  
We don't let our beards get long and shaggy  
Like them Cajun rednecks like to do

Chorus:

I'm proud to be a gangster from Miami  
A place where even cops can have a ball  
We still steal money from the bank house  
And meth is still the biggest thrill of all

-----

Leather whips are still our favorite beat down  
Beads and Roman sandals are not mean  
Gang wars still the roughest game in this town  
And the students here don't respect the high school dean

Chorus:

I'm proud to be a gangster from Miami  
A place where even cops can have a ball  
We still steal money from the bank house  
And meth is still the biggest thrill of all

Nov.2020

Clyde King

# Guess Who?

He never leaves any fingerprints.  
He never leaves a trace of himself.  
Only death, pain, suffering and guilt.

How can you photograph a phantom?  
How can you track a ghost?  
Find DNA?

Most people say he doesn't exist.  
What do you think?  
If you're ambivalent about him  
Don't drop your guard.

His greatest achievement:  
He doesn't exist,  
He's only an allegory.

The moment you think  
He's not around  
Can be fatal.

Funny thing is  
There's plenty of proof  
That he exists.

He makes the koolaid  
And offers you a drink.  
He even pours it for you.

You drink or you don't,  
He doesn't make you.

There is good and  
Evil in this world.

You choose.

April 2019

Clyde King

# Haikus To Halitosis

Your contacts have a tint  
In them I see my image  
You need a breath mint

Your deadly breath so foul  
So toxic, rancid, and rank  
Would kill an OWL!

Can this be love, dear,  
When I smell your putrid breath  
Of garlic and beer?

Turn away your face!  
Put a hand over your mouth,  
Holy shit, what a case!

What crawled down your throat?  
What died in there, a warthog?  
I'm starting to choke!

Please give me some hope.  
Don't breathe in my face,  
Try Dentyne or Scope

Though you may gasp  
Over such odious things  
This you should grasp:

Because, dear cretin,  
Garlic, onions, and beer  
You too have eaten

March 2017

Clyde King

# Happy Ending

The tremors began about  
eight years ago you said  
yes they did I say to my  
wife as she waits impatiently  
for me to die I'm a burden to  
you I say and you said no  
not at all but we know better

Your shaking is getting worse  
maybe we should have Dr. Grant  
increase your carbadopa and  
levodopa you say and I replied  
yes maybe I'd improve  
for awhile but they always get  
worse you say I know it's a  
neurodegenerative disorder  
and I can see in your eyes  
the disgusting bug I've  
turned into you say  
your delusions are getting worse  
that worries me

I say don't worry  
I'll be gone soon  
you say don't talk like that  
I say who cares you don't  
you'd rather I were gone  
so you could get on  
with your life so I've  
decided that I'll stop  
eating and drinking  
and in seven days  
you'll have a happy ending.

Dec.2020

Clyde King

# Her

Her eyes are  
blue twin amethysts.

Her hair is  
wheat fallen down

Her lips are  
twin roses

Her skin a  
porcelain white

Her voice taught  
the birds to sing

Her look  
captures your soul

Her body is a  
classic Greek form

She is a living  
definition of perfection

Her skin could be  
orange her hair

Could be green  
her body deformed

And I would still  
love her

Clyde King



# I Am

I am on a tear tonight!  
Three poems just spurted  
Out of my pen.

This has to be a record  
Somewhere, anywhere?  
Who cares?

P  
O  
E  
M  
S

Are vital to our  
Mental well being.  
If you don't believe me  
Ask Robert Lowell.

Oh my, I forgot.  
He got his ticket punched,  
So you can't. But could he  
Write poetry.

Nov.2020

Clyde King

# I Didn't Know

I didn't know  
How you suffered.  
When you told me  
&quot;I have no life&quot;;  
I couldn't process it.  
All I knew was that  
Your life was over  
For all practical purposes.  
I was helpless  
Because I couldn't  
Change anything.  
Seeing you lying  
There day after day,  
Week after week,  
Year after year,  
I died with you.  
Now I know.  
Now that you're gone  
I'm gone too.  
Why keep on?  
Love is as  
Strong as death is...

April 2019

Clyde King

# I Don't Get It

I don't get it  
Today is like  
Any other day  
Nothing special  
To speak about

Except Everything  
Has Changed  
Nothing remains the same  
They say I say to  
Hell with they

What do they know  
About you your gentle  
Voice your gentle ways  
Your sweetest of faces

Gone dead kaput  
I want to get blind drunk  
Punch a hole in the wall  
Crash my car do  
Anything to stop hurting

Anything

But I can't

Aug.2018

Clyde King

# I Had This Dream

Walking in the snow I saw a glove.  
It stood up and said, &quot;Please stay  
awhile and I'll tell you how I got here.&quot;

Then a crow grabbed my hat  
and it became a cat that smiled at  
me and said, &quot;You're better off dead.&quot;

Two men all in black grabbed me  
and tied me to a post. Then I saw  
a light racing toward me but

I was tied up. Then a sack was thrown  
over me and i couldn't move my legs.  
A big goldfish appeared beside me

and coughed out an orange which  
jumped up and bit my ear...to this  
I remarked, &quot;How queer? &quot;

There I was, tied to a post, a goldfish  
Vomiting oranges, a bitten ear, and  
a pig appeared that looked dead.

What nonsense, don't you think?  
As the fish buttered some toast it began  
to boast that it killed the pig.

I just couldn't cope with this shit  
so I woke up, thinking, &quot;What the hell? &quot;

Clyde King

# Just Sayin'

WTF is this?  
Let go of it all  
So what if you fall  
You'll get back up  
You're still ok  
How the hell  
Did you get here anyway?  
Doesn't matter  
What does matter  
Is how you handle it  
Dear Santa please bring me  
A great big Christmas tree  
I haven't had one  
In many a year  
So get busy Santa  
And bring it here  
I'm beat to hell  
I'm just sayin'  
If you're not real  
Then why am I prayin'  
To hell with this  
I have to piss  
When you're almost 69  
And still doin' fine  
Then get back in line

Nov.2020

Clyde King

# Ketamine (Ket-Uh-Meen)

Ketamine ketamine  
Do you know what I mean  
Ketamine ketamine  
You always make the scene

My sweet ketamine  
You lift me up  
When I get down  
You don't fool around

Best drug I've found  
Ketamine ketamine  
You are my queen  
I hear things I've never seen

I feel things that made  
Me glad I found you ketamine  
You make me want to dance and sing

When you're in me  
I feel like a king

"A damsel with a dulcimer  
In a vision once I saw.  
She was an Abyssinian maid  
And on her dulcimer she played,  
Singing of Mt. Abora."

Thank you Samuel Taylor Coleridge,  
You old opium smoker you!

"Weave a circle round him thrice  
And close your eyes with holy dread!  
For he on honey dew hath fed  
And drunk the milk of paradise! "

Holy moly!  
Could you write poetry!  
If you had ketamine

How many more visions  
Could you have seen?

Nov.2020

Clyde King

# Life Sucks

Every day I wake up  
And hear this strange sucking noise, like  
A clogged vacuum cleaner.  
In my house, when I step outdoors,  
Everywhere I go it seems.

It seems to be telling me  
LIFE SUCKS!

We're thrown into this shit hole  
Without being asked, and then we better  
Navigate through it or get sucked down into it.  
Like falling into a bottomless whirlpool.  
You try to grab something to  
Hold on to, and if you're lucky

A nameless stranger sticks  
Out a hand or a rope or a stick,  
And you grab hold with all your life.  
Problem is, you get tired, weak,  
And lose hope in ever getting out.

That's when life really does SUCK!

April 2019

Clyde King



# Linda Rae

Linda Rae, won't you come out to play?  
Sweet Linda, it's a beautiful day.  
The sun is up, the sky is blue,  
It's beautiful, and so are you.  
Dear Linda, won't you come out and play?

Linda Rae, open up your eyes.  
Dear Linda, see the sunny skies.  
The breezes blow, the birds do sing,  
that we are part of everything.  
Linda Rae, open up your eyes.

Linda Rae, let me see you smile.  
Dear Linda, like a beautiful child.  
We'll build ourselves a daisy chain,  
so let me see you smile again.  
Dear Linda, please let me see you smile?

Linda Rae, won't you come out and play?  
Dear Linda, greet this lovely day.  
The sun is out, the skies are blue,  
it's beautiful, and so are you.  
Dear Linda, won't you come out and play?

Nov.2020

Clyde King

# Lost Glasses

About three weeks ago  
I lost a pair of new glasses.  
They were a stylish tortoise  
Shell black & brown plastic  
Frame with round lens holes.

I called and looked  
Everywhere I habitually go:  
Walmart, Publix, Walgreen's  
Liquor store, my car, my house  
NOTHING!  
SHIT!

But I have to give a shout out  
To Walmart. A very cordial  
Lady answered my call  
And promised to call me back  
Later that same day.  
I thought: right! no way!

Guess what? She did.  
My glasses weren't there  
Only an old beat up pair  
That surely weren't mine  
She remarked. Well now,  
That made my day  
Anyway.

Nov.2020

Clyde King

# Lunch At Hung Chow's

Ate lunch at Hung Chow's diner.  
My stomach did not like it!  
Got sick on rice that smelled like mice,  
Spent evening in recliner.

The food refused to stay down.  
I felt quite discommoded.  
Each time I hurled  
My tongue unfurled  
My drawers they did turn brown.

Salmonella ain't no joke,  
Believe me you don't want it  
Your insides churn  
Like Hell does burn  
From acid hydrochloric.

If you get an itch for sushi,  
Don't order from this dump,  
General T'Sao's chicken  
Ain't finger lock-in'  
You'll need your stomach pumped!

December 2010

Clyde King

# Man Hanged With Fried Egg

Man hanged with fried egg  
Should beware of things he eats.  
They might bring him bat luck.

Clyde King

# Maybe You Are A King

Why are you waiting?  
Wake up, stop hesitating!  
Stop this analysis paralysis.

Did you forget your dreams?  
What stifled that still, small  
Voice in your heart?

That tells you go ahead,  
Do it now before you're dead.  
Do it now.  
Now is all you have,  
All you'll ever have.

May be you'll find  
Some peace of mind.  
May be not.  
So What?

But if you never sing  
Then you will never know  
That you were born a king.

Oct.2020

Clyde King

# Missing You

I woke up this morning  
You were on my mind  
I couldn't think about you  
And not start crying

It's been three years  
And still I grieve  
I miss you sweetheart  
Why did you leave

I know you weren't happy  
But I don't know why  
Did I treat you badly  
I wanted to die

I still don't know why  
You were my sunshine  
You were my sky  
Did you have to leave  
So goodbye, so goodbye

Nov.2020

Clyde King

# My Mother Was A Petrie Dish

My mother was a Petrie dish  
My father was the donor  
I grew up like a jellyfish  
No wonder I'm a loner

Life's not easy with such a start  
Gelatin don't taste like breast milk  
You make little bubbles when you fart  
Your ass don't get wiped with silk

One day they put me in this place  
So dark so moist so warm  
I felt a heartbeat on my face  
My toes began to form

For nine long months I called it home  
Then one day it all ended  
I got thrown out without a comb  
I was quite offended

I found this hound who took me in  
Life seemed so completed  
I lived on roe and quarts of gin  
I was royally feted

There came a day when she said 'Son  
Get a job or just get OUT! '  
I learned to act to have some fun  
Who cares what it's about

Now I live in Malibu  
I've just made a movie  
Life is great for you know who  
Thanks to mom the Petrie

June 2017

Clyde King

# My Other Me

My other me was not around.  
"Where are you? I whispered.  
There came not a sound.

I pulled up the covers,  
Looked under the bed,  
Opened the closet...  
Just scratched my head.

Where has me gone?  
Why no reply?  
Why this trick  
On poor little I?

Then I recalled  
My other me said  
She went to sleep  
In mom and dad's bed.

I just had to know  
And as I surmised,  
She lay there asleep,  
Closed were her eyes.

Wake up ME! Let's play!  
Let's watch TV.  
Life's not much fun  
When you're not with me!

You don't understand?  
It's quite simple, you see...  
Amanda, my twin,  
Is my other ME!

April 2004

Clyde King



# New Drawers For An 8 Year Old

I just got new drawers today.  
When I got home I started to play.

New drawers are really a treat.  
I might even wash my feet.

New drawers are clean and smell really good!  
Wearin' `em's more fun than chopping wood!

New drawers is stuff I really need.  
These Spider-Man drawers are great, indeed!

Nov.2020

Clyde King

# Now

Now is all you will ever have  
And even that is not forever  
And now it's the future  
Say goodbye to the past  
You shouldn't live there anyway  
And now you're a second closer  
To your demise  
That's why now ceases  
To exist for you and you  
Now belong to eternity  
Where there are no nows  
No time to count them with  
You are kaput done dead  
This is not earth shattering truth  
It's the way life is now  
Thus make your nows count  
For something don't waste them  
They are finite  
Because there will come a time  
When you'll run out of them  
Truth is we're always running  
Out of something anyway  
And nows are a limited resource  
Get it?  
No kidding  
You will use them up  
And that's all she wrote  
Now have a nice day

Nov.2020

Clyde King

# Obsession

Once upon a weekend dreary,  
While I stumbled drunk and bleary,  
Over many a bottle and beer can  
Strewn across my motel floor.

Suddenly there came a knocking  
And the sound of a gun cocking,  
Cocking, cocking, cocking, cocking  
Just outside my motel door-  
Only this and nothing more.

"It's the cops," I mumbled,  
About to break in the door.  
There was no running, hiding or evading  
The ghastly sight upon my floor.

There she was, hacked to pieces  
And scattered like the bottles and cans  
Upon my floor-  
Only this, and nothing more!

Ah, distinctly I remember  
It was a cold December  
As the daylight embers  
Shone upon the severed members  
Of the sweet Lenore!

Oh my God! The blood and gore!

And the silken, sad, uncertain  
Rustling of each blood stained curtain,  
Thrilled me, chilled me, as I relived  
The horrible deed the day before.  
Only this, and nothing more!

But the cops, intently beating,  
Beating, beating, beating, beating  
Commanding me to open the door!  
"Sirs," said I, earnestly entreating,

&quot;Do come in and we'll have a meeting  
And discuss the events  
Of the day before.&quot;

&quot;Gentlemen, I beg you when you see  
What's before you, this was only  
A prostitute, a no good whore,  
She got what she deserved forever more.  
Nothing less and nothing more! &quot;

They recoiled in horror and backed to the door!  
&quot;I warned you, didn't I? It's a dreadful sight  
That started last night, and ended with the death  
Of this whore named Lenore!

The sight overwhelmed them,  
The blood and the gore.  
The wine bottles and beer cans mute witness bore.

They stood, then undaunted  
By the scene that was haunted  
By an evil they had never seen before.  
On the floor they threw me, handcuffed and beat me,  
Beat me, cursed me over the life of a whore?

Then I awoke with a shaking, feverish and quaking,  
Mind racing and reeling, as I looked at the ceiling,  
And felt a relief like never before!  
Next to me sleeping lay the sweet Lenore!

Beside me lying, murmuring and sighing,  
&quot;Are you living or dying? What's wrong with you? &quot;  
She did implore.

&quot;Just a nightmare, I'm fine.  
Go back to sleep, my sweet Lenore.&quot;

June 2017

Clyde King

# One Flesh

Our life together passed as  
quickly as the exhalation  
of a breath, though infinitely  
more substantial.

We were one flesh.

We were married forty-three  
years. I asked you to marry me,  
quite unromantically, as we were  
riding in my '73 VW van. I was afraid  
you'd say no or let me think  
about it as you were wont  
to ponder big decisions.

To my elation, you said "yes"  
without hesitation. I'm so grateful  
that you were the woman I needed.  
You are gone now, asleep in death.  
Others say that death is a  
natural thing. I say that's bullshit.  
Ask anyone that has had  
a loved one die, especially  
a mate or a child.

Death is an eventuality for  
all living things and the dead  
return to the dust from  
whence they came. No debate.

"Man is born into sorrow  
as the sparks fly upward,"  
declared the righteous Job.  
He knew about death, loss,  
pain and sorrow. So will we  
one day.

But, enough about death.  
Verbum sap!

Dec.2020

Clyde King

# Orchid

Stop and look at the  
Orchid. What hath God wrought?  
Beyond comprehension.

Clyde King

# Painting

Painting is visual poetry.  
The good artists understand  
The elements and principles  
That make a good composition  
A work of art. A good poet  
Likewise.

Painting, like poetry,  
Is a compression of expression  
On a two dimensional plane.  
Both start out as stories, or a single  
Brushstroke, or a single word,  
And grow from there.

They may be so surreal, so  
Strange and abstract  
That it's unknowable.  
But that's ok. That's why  
It's called ART.

Nov.2020

Clyde King



# Paranoia

I didn't do it. I wasn't there!  
Why does everyone gasp and stare?

What's that you say? I can't remember.  
Where is the body you say I dismembered?

No, no, that's not right!  
I was home the whole time!  
Why do you think I  
Committed that crime?

I don't have a motive,  
There's nothing to hide,  
Except this old chainsaw  
I must confide.

I was watching this movie  
When there appeared  
A ghastly figure! With blood it was smeared!

I thought I was tripping  
But no, it was real!  
I snatched up my chainsaw  
I dispatched it with zeal!

There's no mea culpa,  
No confession to make.  
They're all out to get me!  
Oh, for Pete's sake!

Call my therapist now,  
He'll tell you alright.  
If you're not going to charge me,  
I'll say goodnight!

June 2017

Clyde King

# Prayer For A Native Son

I drew your portrait recently.  
I wish I knew your name, your tribe.  
You are a fine specimen of a man,  
A proud warrior. But no more.  
No more will you ride to  
Anywhere you want, no more  
Will you hunt deer and buffalo,  
No more will you confront  
Your enemies with courage.  
No more will you wear proudly  
Your breastplate of deer rib bone,  
Your copper forearm bands, your  
Eagle feathers, your neckband  
For bravery, your warrior's sash.  
These are artifacts of a dead man,  
Anachronisms as useless as the  
Dust your body has become.

When I looked at your eyes  
I saw in them pride and a deeper  
Sadness. Your warrior's spirit  
Was gone. Your freedom to live  
As a human being, as free as the  
Wind, the eagle, and the wolf.  
In your countenance I saw humiliation,  
Defeat, surrender to powers that  
The Great Father could easily have destroyed.  
When the spirit is stricken there is no  
Life, joy, happiness, freedom.  
It makes me ashamed of the  
Race I come from to know  
The horrors that flew down  
Upon you, like a carrion crow.  
May the Great Father remember  
You and restore you to his promised  
Land, the earthly paradise.

Nov.2020



# Rain

It feels like rain  
Will be falling again.

Why do the clouds scoff  
Because I have a day off?

I swear that somebody knows  
When we need a good hose.

Oh well,  
What the hell...

Oct.2020

Clyde King

# Selena And Bobby

Let's go see Selena  
At the Two Fingers Bar.  
She wriggles like a snake  
That's trapped in a jar.

She moves in ways  
You've never seen before.  
You'll lose your religion  
When she takes the floor.

Old men just sit and dream,  
Young men can only stare,  
When Selena stares back  
Through her black curly hair.

Go get yourself a Redstripe  
And two fingers of gin  
'Cause you ain't goin' nowhere  
When Selena slithers in.

Don't matter where you come from,  
Don't matter who you are,  
'Cause you'll never touch Selena  
In the Two Fingers Bar.

She's got a man named Bobby,  
She loves him heart and soul.  
He's been gone so long,  
She thinks his love's grown.

Bobby loves Selena,  
He writes her when he can.  
He lost both legs in action,  
He feels like half a man.

Go get yourself a Redstripe  
And two fingers of gin  
'Cause you ain't goin' nowhere  
When Selena slithers in.

Selena doesn't know yet,  
Bobby's too afraid to tell.  
He thinks their life is over,  
Why put her in his Hell.

Bobby doesn't know her,  
Doesn't know how true she is.  
If only he would call her,  
Let her know she is his.

Go get yourself a Redstripe  
And two fingers of gin,  
'Cause you ain't goin' nowhere  
When Selena slithers in.

March 2017

Clyde King

# Small Town Girl

Small town girl  
with big time dreams  
All you ever got  
was laid it seems

You were a little redneck girl  
Lived near the tracks  
You got to the casting couch  
But it was on your back

You never made it  
to the big girls game  
You tripped in the gutters  
you forgot your name

You thought you were a diva  
of sorts I suppose  
The only support you ever got  
was by your panty hose

You were a little redneck girl  
Lived near the tracks  
You got to the casting couch  
But it was on your back

You thought you were it  
the star of the show  
On the road you found out  
you had no place to go

You ruined your gift  
the gift to entertain  
You lowered your standards  
the gift was in vain

You're an old woman now  
Chewing the rag and bone too  
Your life has not been good  
and neither have you

You were a little redneck girl  
Lived near the tracks  
You got to the casting couch  
But it was on your back

Nov.2020

Clyde King



# Sometime

Sometimes you have to  
feel your way back  
to where you started.  
You think "I got this!"  
and you got nothing.

Life  
is  
like  
an  
E  
S  
C  
A  
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A  
T  
O  
R

You ride it  
or you walk it.  
You go down  
or you go up, see?

But, don't worry,  
because none of this really  
matters. Life goes on  
with or without you.

You are an exhalation,  
a fart in the wind.  
Poof, You're gone.

Nov.2020

Clyde King

# Speak Well

I like people  
That speak the truth,  
As they know it to be.

I like people that speak  
Modestly, plainly, politely.  
Such are the salt.

Straight as an arrow,  
Little hesitations, equivocations,  
Just plain old words  
That strike the heart  
With a spike.  
And if you like,  
Let's play "Scrabble.?"

Nov.2020

Clyde King

# Take It Slowly

I like graveyards. They're peaceful and quiet.  
Here no one fights or argues, curses or kills.

Here all have reaped the wages of sin: death.  
Now they lie acquitted in peace and rest.

Their loves and hates, joys and griefs,  
Victories and defeats matter no more.

Their memories will fade like a photo,  
Getting dimmer and less distinct as their headstones.

Set your heart to this: live each day  
As if it were your last on this earth  
As if this day was the first day of eternity

Live each day as if you had  
A second chance to live your life over again

As if you were about to make  
The same mistakes you did before.

Life is an exhalation, a brief moment,  
Yet in it we sense eternity.

Take it slowly.

March 2017

Clyde King

# Tell Me

When do you reach the point  
of no return to sanity?  
are any of us really normal?  
completely sane?

I don't know. Maybe the rain  
can tell us the answer.  
maybe the rain tells us  
when you go there's no going back.

Look at it falling on the rack  
that stretches our minds beyond  
this earth and beyond the stars.  
tell me if you know please.

Tell me when your mind sees  
the end of life and the pit  
we all fear falling into.  
do we really die or just pass

Into another plane of circumstance?  
tell me if you can.  
show me a world beyond this one  
and then we can dance.

Oct.2020

Clyde King

# The American Dream

I'm tired of givin'  
To the cost of livin, '  
Gettin' nothin' in return.

If I was a dollar  
I'd surely holler  
The way folks make me burn!

You slave all day  
To make your pay,  
And when the day is through-

Yer no further ahead  
Than if you stayed in bed,  
'Cause the guvmint got it too!

April 2019

Clyde King

# The Day The World Ended

The world ends today  
On Sunday, the eighth of May.

Should I let them know?  
Would it spoil their day?

Would they just get up  
And walk away?

No, no, that won't do.  
The hours left are just a few!

Tans would be ruined.  
The beer would get warm.

What bad taste.  
Such poor form.

The azure sea, the cerulean sky,  
Would curse a man as heartless as I.

May 1988

Clyde King

# The Lake

The lake this morning  
is covered by fog. My little  
dog waits impatiently for me  
to take her fishing as I  
gaze upon the rose  
fingered dawn and anticipate  
a good catch of fish.

I sit on the bank facing  
the rising sun. I'm hidden  
in the cattails and only a  
thin cane pole can be seen  
poking out, with a light  
line and bobber barely seen.

I don't cast a shadow, I'm  
as still as an old stump. The  
fish will never see me sitting  
here in the tall cattails. Fish  
aren't stupid but they can't resist  
bait food when they're hungry.  
I'm counting on their hunger  
for my breakfast. Now, if only  
my dog will be still.

Dec.2020

Clyde King

# The Special K Blues

I got the Special K blues  
I got the Special K blues

When I run out it's no use  
The blues are on the loose

Please help me get by  
Don't soothe me with a lie

Tomorrow is too far away  
I need my K today

When K gets me high  
I don't care if I die

I got the Special K blues  
I got the Special K blues

You think that I'm a fool  
Maybe but I'm cool

It's my life so get lost  
You're not paying the cost

I don't like the way I feel  
This bad is much too real

When I get stoned I forget  
All the shit that causes regret

I got the Special K blues  
Dont wish you were in my shoes

Sept.2020

Clyde King



# The Unspoken

I hear the rustle of dry leaves  
I feel the ruined bones  
I see swirling reds, blues, greens  
Fading like water colors on wet paper

I look for corners folded over  
Of pages in the books you once read

There are no notes in the margins  
No words underlined to help me  
Remember what was lost

Once you told me you could not  
Think about me without crying  
I never understood what you meant

Did I fail to become your dream?  
Did you refuse to become mine?

Is that what you couldn't tell me?  
Is that why you left?

June 2017

Clyde King

# The Visit

My skiff is yare and tight  
and still knows how to find Li's  
bamboo hut on this great river.  
The cormorant's black wings  
wave to me a welcome.  
You run to greet me and  
as you embrace me I smell  
boiled cabbage, onions, bread,  
and I see three little fishes  
in your basket trap. Dinner  
is almost ready. Good timing Tu.  
The green wine bottles are "breathing";  
in this joyful air as I am.  
Can life get any better than this?

"Tu, you haven't changed at all  
since you were that dreamy and  
adventurous sixteen year old."  
My friend doesn't know the hard  
times I've had and the deaths I've caused.  
Every night I wipe off this dust from  
the dead and I see faceless ghosts  
that motion for me to cross over  
and leave this world. The monkeys  
in his garden distract me while Li  
suggests we have a poetry contest,  
like in the old days. Why not?  
Li is a man of letters and I've been a soldier  
in the emperor's guard. Perhaps our  
fanciful figurations will keep my ghosts  
away for now. Li gets his son to tune his lute  
and we're off with wine at our backs.

The candles grow shorter and shorter.  
Empty wine bottles litter the floor.  
The oven's fire has died and a rooster  
is crowing. It's time to go now.  
I've still got a long way to travel.  
I wipe off the ghost's dust, embrace

Li, and push my skiff into the turbid waters  
my life has become.

Dec.2020

Clyde King

# Time's Up

Time is all I've got now  
I don't have you anymore  
I will keep on loving you  
Until they drop the floor

I can see your lovely face  
Then I ask the question why  
Did I end up in this place  
Where I can't see the sky

Time is all I've got now  
I don't have you anymore  
I will keep on loving you  
Until they drop the floor

When you came to see me  
I felt guilty and ashamed  
When the jury found me guilty  
It was others that I blamed

I know now that I'm guilty  
I'll die here in this hole  
Only death can free me  
O God save my soul

The choices that I made  
Were only mine alone  
The price that I must pay  
O God let death atone

Time is all I've got now  
I don't have you anymore  
I will keep on loving you  
Until they drop the floor

They've taken my last freedom  
I hold fast to this hope  
Soon I will beat them  
When I'm hangin' on this rope

Don't cry for me honey  
God knows I've had my fun  
I sold my soul for money  
When I picked up that gun

You can live in the past  
Or get on with your life  
Our love went by too fast  
Thank God you were my wife

Please forget me honey  
I caused you only pain  
This will soon be over  
When the blackness hits my brain

Time is all I've got now  
I can't hold you anymore

June 2017

Clyde King

# To Kill A Mockingbird-For Harper Lee

There was a mockingbird  
Or catbird as we call it in the South  
Lying on my patio

It must have flown into my  
Pool cage through a hole  
And broke its neck in a panic to  
Escape I surmised

My dog saw it first and she  
Was poking it with her paw  
As if it would get up and fly away  
If she did it long enough

But it didn't get up  
It was dead but the body  
Was still warm

I picked it up and I couldn't  
Find any signs of how it died  
It broke my heart to look  
At its soft gray and white body  
Black legs, black beak and  
Black holes for eyes

Something happened that day  
That had no explanation  
But something was lost-

The life of a bird  
It's beautiful singing that  
As legend has it was learned  
By hearing Eve sing

A time when we were pure  
Free and innocent  
Before the darkness fell  
And we lost our way  
As Scout Finch did

Maybe a Boo Radley  
Will show up just in time  
And save us from being  
Destroyed by it

Maybe not  
I buried the little bird  
And buried my heart with it  
Nothing will ever be the same  
Just as it was for her

June 2019

Clyde King

# Today Is Today

Today IS today,  
No debate there.  
But "today" sounds  
Strange when you say it  
Out loud several times.

The word "to";  
Can be a preposition,  
An infinitive marker,  
Or an adverb. In this  
Case it's a preposition, showing  
Something being approached  
Or reaching a particular  
Condition, "day";

But is "today" really  
Being approached?  
Isn't it always "today"?  
Isn't a "day" always  
24 hours long?

We invented  
24 hours of time to help  
Ships to know when  
And where they were.  
Thank you Englishmen.  
Lines of longitude are  
Approximately 1,000  
Miles wide, thus  
24 time zones.

Enough of this  
Didacticism already.  
"Day" is easy. It's a  
Noun indicating a  
24 hour period and is the  
Gold standard for  
Keeping time.



All of "today";  
Is an invention,  
An abstraction!  
Words and letters are  
Pure abstractions,  
Inventions by man,  
To communicate.

But if you stare  
At a single letter long enough  
It becomes a squiggly design,  
That's all. Consider the  
Letter "g";  
What an interesting design to  
Denote it's sound when spoken  
Singly in your language. Maybe  
Your language doesn't have an  
Equivalent counterpart.

I'm sure that few people  
Will find this interesting,  
But try, Ok?

Clyde King

# Today Would've Been...

Today would've been ok  
If I had stayed in bed,  
Read some Charles Bukowski,  
Studied some more of  
The "Artist's Manual Of  
Design and Composition."

It's good stuff really if  
You're a serious artist,  
But if you're a hack  
Don't bother because  
You won't get it anyway.

Some guy was watching  
Me paint the other day  
And asked what I was doing.  
Not wanting to be condescending  
To this chap  
I said "I'm painting 'plein air.'"

I was waiting for his question  
"What does 'plein air' mean? "  
But he never asked.

I guess he didn't want to appear  
As dull as he already appeared,  
So he said, "Oh, ok"  
Like he was Claude Monet  
And abruptly walked away.

Wow! I just made a triolet  
That rhymed without  
Even trying!

Feb.2019

Clyde King

# Tonight

Tonight the moon has  
a death's shroud around it.  
A cold wind is out of the northwest.  
The candles gutter  
as the cold air trickles  
around the old splintered  
window and door.  
My bed is cold and so am I.  
Why did you leave me  
here alone to talk  
with ghosts? The wine bottle  
is nearly empty. I hear mice  
running across the ceiling  
and I pull the sleeping bag  
over my head, wishing  
it were morning.

Dec.2020

Clyde King

# Twins

After seven years of married life  
I came to the conclusion that  
not having children was a  
bad conclusion, a bad end,  
a detour into lonely old age.

I could see my wife, Jeanne,  
and me, scuttling about  
the house like a pair of old crabs,  
looking for something dead  
to eat and waiting to die.

No sir, not for me.  
I asked her about adopting.  
At first she objected and  
said that "you wouldn't be  
a good father." Well, I'd  
never been a father and I  
never had a father raise me.  
Maybe she was right.

But I persisted and ignored  
her cutting remark and I  
chalked it up to her own  
upbringing, far from ideal.  
Alcoholic dad, no love or  
affection ever shown between  
her parents, so she assumed  
(ugly word)that I'd be like  
her old man, a drunken bum.

Big mistake. I was not like  
her dad, who was irresponsible,  
unaccountable and unacceptable.

About a week passed  
and we passed each other  
like "ships in the night." Then,  
by golly, she said, "If we're

going to adopt I want twins.&quot;  
What? Twins?

Yes, sir, she said twins,  
not just any kind, but  
&quot;I want identical twins.&quot;  
Whoa! You go from  
zero to two in one second?

I said, &quot;OK with me! &quot;  
Then the ball began to roll  
all the way to Costa Rica.  
But first we looked in  
local homes for unwed mamas.

Then we saw a beautiful  
TV program about inter-  
national adoptions and the  
lack of red tape and all that BS  
and we got our asses over  
to an agency in Bel Aire, FL,  
and met the lady that opened  
the door. She said, &quot;We are getting infants  
from China, Russia, Brazil and  
Central America. But the quickest  
way is from Costa Rica now.&quot;

Holy cow! So that's where  
this poem ends and a new one  
BEGINS!

Nov.2020

Clyde King

# Uncle Willie's Sandwich Shop

Uncle Willie's Sandwich Shop  
South side of Ybor City  
Is the place you got to stop  
When you're feelin' hungry

Bacon, tomato, and a scrambled egg  
On Cuban toast with butter  
Grease drippin' on your leg  
There ain't nothin' better

Add sausage and red eye gravy  
Hot sauce and a deviled crabby  
Wash it down with cafe' con leche'  
So what if you gets flabby

Drive South on 22nd Street  
'Bout two miles South of 60  
Get your mouth set to eat  
Good food that's real rib sticky

(This is a local greasy spoon that's been around for years and is an icon in the breakfast and lunch trade. It's in Tampa, Florida, and I stopped here often to enjoy their comfort food.)

Clyde King

# Valentine's Creek

We ran down an old  
Rotting vertebra  
Bleached white  
By the sun and saltwater

And dove in intending  
To swim across fifty  
Yards or so of  
Brackish Jelly Fish  
Filled water called  
Valentine's Creek

I dove in after my  
Older brother Sonny  
And his friends all older  
Than my five or six years  
On this planet and I  
Tried to keep up

But couldn't because  
I just couldn't  
Do it and I got  
So tired my arms and legs  
Stopped moving  
And I started to sink

It was then I grasped  
The reality of death  
My father never came  
Back from the Korean War  
So I got the news flash

Keep on kicking your feet  
And moving your arms  
Keep your head up  
And breathe

June 2005





# Wear Clean Underwear

Remember what your momma said  
When you were layin' up in your bed  
With your blanket pulled over your head?

"Always wear clean underwear  
Whenever you go anywhere  
Cause your mama can't be everywhere! "

"In case you have an accident  
Or have a hospital incident  
You might get embarrassed by the event."

"When they pull your bloomers down  
And see what made them turn to brown  
They'll think you're just a poopy clown! "

The moral of this story is:  
Watch how you talk, walk and live  
Or people won't care what you give.

When you got on dirty underwear  
You stink to everyone everywhere.  
"Do what I say! Do you hear! ? "

January 2006

Clyde King

# What Have I Become?

Friends I don't have any  
Enemies I've got a few  
Lovers I've had many  
True ones maybe two

I'm running alone tonight  
Put a spoonful up my nose  
Hope no one picks a fight  
'Cause I'll kill 'em I suppose

Stay out of my way  
I don't want to hurt you  
Listen to what I say  
Contemplate your future too

If you got a pretty wife  
Maybe a kid or two  
Don't throw away your life  
Get it I hope you do

To me your life is cheap  
I don't care what I do  
If your life you want to keep  
Please take this cue

Run away as fast as you can  
Don't look back  
Don't overthink this plan  
When you're dead you're not coming back Jack

Or give me your hand  
Let me look in your eyes  
I just want to understand  
Why this world cries

Why this life has no plan  
No hope no love no friend  
That will listen and comprehend  
How I feel being forgotten alone

By all that I've known

Alone alone alone

What's the point in going on

Let's get this done

I hurt to the bone

Sept.2020

Clyde King

# When The Time Comes

When the time comes,  
Will you let me know?  
When the time comes,  
I will let you go.

When the time comes,  
You can close your eyes.  
When the time comes,  
We'll be in paradise.

When the time comes...  
-Revelation 21: 3,4

Nov.2017

Clyde King

# Where Is My Lord?

They say he's dead, his body stolen  
My Lord is dead, impaled on Golgotha.  
We know Joseph took his body,  
Wrapped him in fine linen  
And laid him in his tomb.

Now the body is gone,  
Stolen the disciples say.  
It is the Day of Preparation,  
How can we get his body  
Ready for burial?

They say Caiaphas took him  
So we could not steal his body  
To prove he was resurrected.

They say Pilate stole him  
To hang him on the wall  
To warn all would be messiahs.

This morning Mary Magdalene,  
Joanna, and James' mother Mary  
Went to the tomb to anoint him  
With perfumed oil, to wrap him in fresh linen.

He was gone.  
But two men in flashing white garments  
Were there and they said to them: 'Do not look for him here,  
He is not with the dead, but with the living.  
He has risen on the third day  
As he prophesied. Go!  
Tell his disciples! &quot;

The disciples would not believe them,  
They said it was nonsense.  
Who will believe the words  
Of women?

Cephas, the one the Lord called Peter,

And the disciple Jesus loved, John,  
Have gone to the tomb.  
They will find him.  
Then we will know.  
Then we will know.

June 2006

Clyde King

# Who Am I?

Who am I?

I don't know.

I'd give worlds to know

If that were possible.

I know I'm a human,

A male. That sums it up.

I know there are external

Forces beyond my ken

That mould me into a different

Person than I was the day

Before. If we metamorphose

Each day then it's nearly

Impossible to know

What and who we are anyway.

We get a glimpse of who we are

When we give into desires,

Confront challenges and conflict,

When we try to light the fire

That moves us to act. No

Matter how dire the straits

We find ourselves in.

Only when we are challenged

By that undefinable thing

Called life do we get to

Know ourselves.

"To be, or not to be,

That is the question" Hamlet

Asked himself.

Life holds up the mirror

And shows us what we are.

In moments of deepest vulnerability

And weakness do we see ourselves,

Unless the cataracts of self

Ignorance cloud our sight.

"Know thyself" admonished

Socrates. Good advice.

If we grope blindly through

Life we will miss the star  
That makes our light shine.

We must have a code to live by  
That only we know or the jackals  
Of ignorance will rip off our flesh.  
Life demands self knowledge  
If we are to live authentically,  
To own ourselves, to be able  
To answer the question  
&quot;Who am I?

Clyde King



# Who Cares?

I'm sitting here  
In my drawers  
Drinking a beer.  
Who Cares?

Now that you're here  
Let's talk about life.  
And what the hell  
Is causing this strife.

Do you really care?  
Or are you bothered by your hair?  
What's the matter with you?

Can't you see  
What this world is coming to?  
You got another think coming!  
I hope you see it through.

'Cause we're going down!  
This place is being ruled  
By a bunch of clowns!  
So, bend over, do try

And kiss your ass goodbye!

Clyde King

# Winter In Florida

Yes, Florida does have a winter  
but you've got to look quickly  
or you'll miss it.

You can tell when the leaves  
leave the tree and when the days  
get cooler. Mosquitos aren't as bad  
and the grass stops growing, thankfully.

The wind is out of the North  
and brings cold fronts with it. People,  
especially girls, like to wear their  
knee high boots and mufflers.  
And you see children all wrapped  
up like breakable toys. Gosh,  
winter is no big deal here.

But when the Gulf gets cold  
the rainbow trout are running.  
What for? I don't know. But  
it's good fishing in the winter,  
when the snook, tarpon and trout  
are waiting for you to catch them.

And another big clue it's winter  
in the land of sun and flowers-  
"snow birds" that are not  
the feathered kind, they are of  
mankind, an oxymoron if I ever heard one.

Dec.2020

Clyde King

# Words

Words are like food.  
They're tasty, spicy, sweet,  
hot, cold, salty, sour,  
or just plain blah blah.

The ear tastes words  
as the tongue tastes food,  
right? Words can be  
figurations or literal,  
prejudiced and neutral,  
emotionally biased but  
never neutral. Native  
Americans, it is said,  
when they first meet  
a stranger, look down  
at the ground and listen  
to the tones and modulations  
of the stranger's words  
first before they form an  
impression of the other.

Then they look at their faces  
to see if their words are  
congruent with their face  
and overall demeanor.

It's said this universe  
began with the word.  
A sound, a vibration,  
a wave of undulating  
energy started it all.

Such things are too  
much for me to understand.  
But this I do know, all words  
have more than one  
meaning. It's up to you  
and me to see this,  
to recognize it when

it occurs.

Nov.2020

Clyde King

# Writing Poetry

Start with a story, fictional  
Or true. Then start with  
A word and the rest will  
Follow like an army of  
Ants that has found  
The picnic.

Words must be thoughtfully  
Chosen to get the mood  
And spirit to blend. The  
Golden thread, as it's called,  
Has to be followed to its logical  
Or illogical conclusion, right?  
It doesn't have to have  
A happy ending, it can be  
A heartbreaking sob

Tell the truth as you understand  
It. Don't imitate any body  
Or you're a phony. Even if it's  
Fiction, tell the truth.

Get it?  
Hope so.

Nov.2020

Clyde King

# You Are

A second is always a second.  
Sixty of them make a minute.  
A minute is always a minute.  
Sixty of them make an hour.  
And twenty four hours make a day  
And three-hundred sixty-five days make a year.

These never change.  
They may seem to speed up  
Or slow down, but that's  
Only our perceptions  
Playing games.

Time never changes,  
But we are changed by it.  
It marches on, as they say.  
Time is the great equalizer  
And destroyer.  
No one can escape it.

In the end, we end,  
But not time.  
Time is timeless.

And you, you are always you.

Oct.2020

Clyde King

# You Can't

You can't love what  
You won't die for,  
You don't love if you  
Demand it,  
You can't be  
If you won't be,  
You can't live  
If you don't know  
You will die,  
You can't give  
If you think you  
Will lose,  
You're not alive  
If you exist  
Without reason,  
Without finding out  
Who you are in this  
Thing called LIFE.

March 2018

Clyde King

# You Got A Fat Walmart Butt

Just let me sit here and drink.  
Getting tight helps me not to think.

When you're haunting my thought  
I know in the blues I'll get caught.

When you told me goodbye  
There were no tears in your eyes.

Your heart grew cold as ice.  
But let me give you some advice.

When you lay down with dogs  
You get up with lice.  
And lice ain't nice.

Why should I care  
How you got in my hair?

You're a low down, dirty slut!  
And you got a fat Walmart BUTT!

So go on and leave.  
I'm not going to grieve.

Go to Walmart your favorite place  
And get out of my face!  
You're a rotten disgrace!

October2020

Clyde King



# You Wretch

Let me know  
When you go  
It's only polite  
And turn off the light

I'm bluer than blue  
'Cause I don't have you  
You didn't say goodbye  
I guess it was all a lie

You sure fooled me  
Into loving you, see?  
I was your fool  
I became your tool

You tore out my soul  
To make yourself whole  
My life you stole  
Then threw it in a hole

Why? Why did you do that?  
You had it all down pat  
You're nothing but  
A no good alley cat

You'll get yours someday  
Someone will come along and say  
"Give it up, you wretched whore  
There's nothing here  
For you anymore."

Nov.2020

Clyde King