

Poetry Series

**Fred Rik Kesner**  
**- poems -**



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# Fred Rik Kesner()

Freds Kesner lives and writes from unseen places...a poet who turned a childhood stammer into the heartbeat of their work. Here you'll discover micro-poems, ritual reflections, and map-inspired essays. Dive in, leave a comment, and let's explore the spaces between words.



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# Melded Roads

'melded roads'

They stay with me.  
In small decisions.  
In the way I steady myself.  
In the quiet work of the day.

What the years removed,  
mind keeps:  
a line resurfacing,  
a teaching that took time,  
a direction I still follow.

Their lives were brief beside the vastness.  
Still, something of them lingers.

May what was good in them move forward through me.  
Not so much burden.  
As continuation.

When they return to thought,  
may gratitude stand first—  
for the stretch we shared,  
for the way their road now melds into mine.

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Fred Rik Kesner

# Backward-Facing Carriage

'Backward Carriage, Early Draft of a Life'

The train shudders  
through a corridor of fields,  
windows flicking past barns, pylons,  
a rusted ute half-sunk in grass.

I sit face against the direction of travel,  
watching the day unspool behind me,  
towns shrinking  
into small, forgettable shapes:

A few old choices drift up,  
passing sensations, random impressions,  
things that just happened  
when I wasn't paying attention.

The carriage rocks.  
Someone coughs.  
A suitcase thuds against metal.  
Symbolic of something vague,  
the world doing what it does.

A bend in the track reveals  
a cluster of houses  
I once thought I'd never leave.  
Their roofs look smaller now,  
paint bleached by years  
I never bothered counting.

I try to picture the version of myself  
that walked those streets,  
but the image won't settle  
—it flickers,  
then dissolves into the passing scrub.

The train slows near a siding,  
gravel kicking up under the wheels.

A dog trots along the fence line,  
keeping pace for a moment  
before drifting off toward the sheds.

I breathe in the diesel-warm air,  
searching for lack of meaning,  
half-expected revelations  
—the motion lets me sigh  
carry me backward  
to wherever this line ends.

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# Crosscurrent Morning

'crosscurrent morning'

Streetcar wires shivering above the block,  
first light wringing at last night's worn edges.

A bin truck grinds somewhere behind the shops,  
its metal cough slipping under the hour.

Pigeons lift from a rooftop ledge,  
their wings catching the weak shine.

A bottle rolls across the pavement,  
not kicked, just moving on its own drift.

Your step lands in a shallow film of runoff,  
cold grit rising through the sole.

A bus door hisses open down the street,  
no passengers, just the sound releasing itself.

A shadow crosses the shopfront glass once,  
too quick to read, too slow to ignore.

And the morning keeps unfolding,  
steady as breath, uneven as the city's pulse.

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# Petering Out

One stares across the fading yard,  
Where autumn gnaws the rusting gate.  
The days once raced now stumble hard,  
And every hour arrives too late.

The mirror keeps a thinner ghost,  
Its silver tongue devoid of grace.  
It knows the things one fears to host,  
Yet says them with a stranger's face.

Still somewhere in the evening rain,  
A stubborn ember yearns to glow.  
Though engines cough and groan with pain,  
Some roads refuse to let us go.



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# Waking Lights

'waking lights'

The room sits in its late-hour weight,  
charcoal settling where the boards dip.  
A latch sticks; the cold has worked at it  
through weeks of short days.

The radio mutters through the same reports.  
Outside, the yard is a sheet of dull metal,  
the shed roof taking the last scraps of light  
without giving anything back.

Vermeer knew this hour -  
how a wall keeps its colour  
until a single line of brightness  
slips across it from nowhere expected.

A jug on the sill brightens by degrees.  
Dust shifts.  
The room changes shape  
light, remembering waking.

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# Standing Where The Easel Stood

'Standing Where the Easel Was'

I take the place he chose—  
this narrow hinge of street  
where yellow gathers itself  
and pushes out into the hour.

The tables lean toward the road  
as if waiting for a sign  
that never quite arrives.  
Their surfaces hold a soft heat,  
a lingering after talk has thinned.



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A waiter moves through the glow  
with the calm of someone  
who knows the night will keep its shape  
no matter who comes or goes.

The stones beneath my feet  
carry a worn shine,  
a record of countless crossings  
that never needed to be written down.

Above, the sky works through its blues—  
layered, unsettled, a depth  
that refuses to flatten even when lamps  
insist on their own field of gold.

I stand here, letting the hour  
press lightly against me.  
Interpretation not demanded.  
Lessons unsolicited.

The scene simmers its own truth:  
a corner of the world  
left open long enough  
for colour to do what it must.

I lift my hand,  
not to correct the night  
but to follow it—  
line by line,  
glow by glow,  
until the canvas learns  
what the street already knows.

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Fred Rik Kesner

# The Secret Cartography Of Debden

&quot;The Secret Cartography of Debden&quot;

The exercise book was a shallow grave  
where a boy first buried the things he gave  
to a room that traded his grief for cheer,  
spilled with the gin and the holiday beer.  
&quot;Our Phillip's been writing, &quot; the mother said,  
and turned the lights on inside his head,  
leaving him small in the grammar-school coat,  
with a fistful of lines stuck tight in his throat.

But a boy's best friend is the dirt he keeps.  
The records show where the shadow sleeps:  
He did not run to the African ports,  
Or lose his name to the parish courts;  
He took the boundaries, the broken fence,  
And built a wall out of permanence.

The hand that held the hidden pen  
Became the ruler of local men,  
Guiding the school at the edge of the lane,  
Fighting the state for the right-of-way train.  
He stepped from the page to the heavy loam,  
And turned his exile into a home.

Let the archives say that the ledger cleared:  
The boy who was mocked is a man revered.  
The notebook is closed, and the fields are deep,  
And the best of his verses are his to keep.

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# A Younger Poet's Reply

'Younger Poet's Reply'

I hear what you say about self-inquiry,  
how it begins without announcement,  
but for me it arrives in small shifts of light,  
a sense that something in the day  
has turned its face toward attention.

Solitude helps, though not in the way you mean.  
It opens a quiet field where patience  
moves at its own pace.  
Criticism lands gently now,  
not as correction but as a way  
to understand where the line wants to go.  
Love & distance feel less like spacing  
and more like a rhythm I'm learning to keep.

Sadness as transformation still surprises me.  
It changes the scale of things  
before I know it's happening.  
Childhood memory moves beside me,  
steady as breath,  
while art & nature keep offering  
their unhurried conversation.

I'm not sure where this leads,  
but I can feel myself becoming.

.

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# An Older Poet's Advice

'An Older Poet's Advice'

Self-inquiry begins as a shift in emphasis,  
a quiet redirection of attention  
that solitude makes possible.  
Inner necessity gathers in the background,  
steady, unannounced, shaping the next move.

Patience arranges the work in a workable order,  
letting each part settle before the next begins.  
Criticism filters through the process,  
kept only where it clarifies intent.  
Love & distance create a spacing that holds.

Sadness as transformation alters the scale of things,  
changing how the present is measured.  
Childhood memory moves through the day  
as a set of quiet indicators, while  
Art & nature continue their steady exchange.

Everything leans toward becoming.

.

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# Late Cup

'Late Cup'

day thins on toothy edges,  
each request arrives, softening contours.  
Still, hands move in steady patterns,  
carrying out what the moment asks  
while the inner field settles  
into quieted grain.

a cup waits on the bench,  
its position unchanged,  
holding a small shift of light  
room adjusting around it rim  
body and mind follow that adjustment,  
working through each hour  
with same steady mutedness.

corridor air congregates  
in slow stepping gait,  
walls leaning into familiar stillness.  
A hooked cloth stays where it was,  
offering a point to return to  
as the day moves in lowered light,  
each motion calibrating toothed whispers  
of what can be carried.

.

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# Quieted Again

'quieted grain'

day thins on toothy edges,  
each request arrives, softening contours  
Still, hands move in steady patterns,  
carrying out what the moment asks  
while the inner field settles  
into quieted grain.

.

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# Please Stay On The Line

'please hold the line'

The outage moves through the district  
like a slow shutter:  
screens dim, routers blink out,  
the towers fall quiet.

By late afternoon  
the only things still running  
are the old booths  
near the tram depot,  
their glass etched  
with years of initials.



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People drift toward them  
in loose clusters,  
each carrying a number  
they've memorised  
for the first time in years.

Inside the nearest booth,  
the receiver lifts easily.

A recorded voice  
cuts in at once:  
"All our operators are busy now.  
Please stay on the line."

Then the music starts —



a thin, looping melody  
that sounds like it's been  
copied too many times,  
its edges worn down  
to a soft metallic shimmer.

You wait,  
listening for the moment  
when the message might change,  
'Your call is important to us...'  
when the music might break,  
when a real voice  
might finally arrive.

But the loop holds steady,  
turning over itself  
with patient precision,  
as if the world  
is keeping you in place  
until it decides  
what comes next.

.

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# Between Beats

Late afternoon carries its usual drift,  
a few steps folding into the next crossing,  
someone adjusting their bag as they pass,  
a shopfront glow shifting when the door swings wide.

Nothing announces itself,  
yet the street feels tuned to a low register,  
as if each small motion were part of a larger pattern  
that doesn't need to be named to be felt.

You keep walking,  
letting the rhythm of the footpath set the pace,  
not chasing anything,  
just moving through a city that seems to breathe  
in its own unhurried way.



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# Shadow Of Dissent

A stray raggamuffin breeze skitters through the yard,  
catching on the rags left drying on the line—  
each one a small refusal, a frayed rebuttal  
to the tidy doctrines the elders once stitched.

A pair of gams angles past the gate,  
carefree, unmeasured, unblessed by any ledger.  
Someone laughs into a muffle,  
a sound half-muffled, half-winged,  
as if the world were loosening its collar.

A muffin sits cooling on the sill,  
its fin of steam rising like a shrug—  
neither symbol nor lesson,  
just warmth drifting into the late afternoon  
like cotton candy dissolving on a tongue  
that refuses to confess anything but the moment.

And the yard—  
unruled, unindexed—  
keeps offering these small, stubborn gestures,  
each one a pivot away from the old script,  
each one a way of being here  
without bowing to the frame.

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# Mother, Mother (2026)

Morning comes softer now.  
You rise without rushing,  
the house no longer waiting  
for your first move.

I visit with small things —  
fruit cut the way you like,  
a cardigan folded on the chair,  
the kettle already warm.

You smile as if surprised  
that care can travel in this direction.

There was a time  
when every hour depended on you:  
school forms, scraped knees,  
the quiet way you steadied the day  
before anyone else was awake.

You never called it sacrifice;  
you just did what the day required.

Now the rooms keep their own order.  
The children are grown,  
the lists shorter,  
your hands gentler with their tasks.

You speak of the past  
as if it were a long corridor  
you once walked daily  
and now visit only when needed.

This afternoon,  
you sit by the window  
watching the street settle into evening.  
You say you like this stage —  
the ease, the space,  
the way the world no longer  
asks so much of you.

I don't tell you  
that I still measure myself  
against the quiet strength  
you carried for years.

Instead, I refill your cup,  
adjust the blanket at your side,  
and let the moment stretch  
between us —  
as if the years have shifted  
while we weren't looking.

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# Vespers Of Neon

The night loosens its grip as we step out,  
streets still washed in the last colours of neon,  
a soft shimmer running along its gutters  
like a river deciding whether to keep going  
or give itself over to morning.

A warm breath moves through the quiet blocks,  
not an old enchantment now,  
but something gentler,  
as if the city itself were exhaling after the long hours,  
letting us glide through its half-lit corridors  
with the ease of dancers who know the floor by heart.

We drift past corners without hurry,  
letting the world slide a little under our feet,  
the sky paling just enough to hint at what's coming  
but not enough to break the spell.  
Somewhere far off, a tune from the night before  
tries to rise again, softer now,  
as though it knows it's time to step aside.

And in this almost-morning,  
before the first edge of light finds us,  
we move through the last of the neon's glow  
with a quiet certainty  
that the night has not ended-  
only changing its shape.

.

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# Shrug Off This Dis-Ease

'shrug off this dis-ease'

Understand the tilt,  
the tension within this frame,  
The way the dis-ease  
flickers like a dying flame.

I'll shrug the weight of it,  
the 'how' and the 'why, '  
If you'll just be the metric  
that doesn't tell a lie.

Don't ask for a confession  
                                or a fevered plea,  
Just watch the blazer settle—  
                                and finally see me.



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# Poetical Query

does it take a poet to read another  
or a poetic soul to catch a glister  
do poems fire all we can muster

o'er lines traversing verses light or dire  
why do poems keep an inner pyre  
poetry dares conspire 'round what we admire

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# Landing

'landing'

They came in from the long stretch  
                                of water they crossed,  
the bow marked  
                        by old repairs easing onto sand,  
boards worn by years  
                        of use taking the weight again.

Someone standing on the ridge  
                watched them steady their packs,  
the wind settling after the night  
                as they moved inland,  
                toward the warmth  
                        of a room already busy.



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# Windswept Voices

'windswept voices'

rough is the wind that forces  
a trunk sideways from its long-held berth,

not quick to undo what's stood for years  
yet close enough to warn me through its scrape:

we keep moving along the same worn track,  
no pause in the work or its miles,

and something behind us still pushes forward,  
brushing hard against these outer boards—

a shape from earlier country,  
its gusts carrying what once passed through.



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# Side By Side

side by side

...without much ceremony  
the orchid on window's sill  
shifts room's first light—  
a new bloom opened overnight,  
its blue-lavender edge  
catching recall in its wave  
a palette from long ago.

From the kitchen  
comes a soft crack of corn  
warming in a pot,  
each burst taking on  
a faint ivory sheen  
as it unfurls.

Beside it, sliced bread  
toasts to a steady warmth—  
moving through the house.

We don't tally the years.  
We read them in plants  
that have stayed with us—  
in their thicker stem,  
by way of kept seasons  
choosing to open again.

The rooms look much the same  
as they did yesterday,  
but the bloom shifts the place  
by a fraction—

a quiet reminder carried  
in colour and morning warmth  
that another year has settled in,  
and we're still here,

doing the next thing  
side-by-side.

.

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# Unsigned Horizon

&quot;unsigned horizon&quot;;

The horizon stays unsigned,  
a gray span that won't take a mark.  
The raft holds by its own inward pull,  
nothing formal keeping it together.  
No place for the shore to grab hold,  
no cut in the wood for a hook  
to turn it toward the wharf.

When the cloud cover hardens into a wall,  
and the air drops in its own weight,  
the mind has to adjust to that dimness.  
It learns to breathe underwater,  
to keep a small counter-current alive  
while the world asks for a choice  
it has no right to ask for.

The shore's light keeps searching—  
looking for a gap, a point to press—  
and meets only a surface  
that offers nothing back.

The sun rises needing no agreement,  
moving in its own slow way,  
a gold that holds even as dark pushes in—  
gold behind the grey,  
heat that stays when the rest goes cold,  
steady enough to keep  
the raft in one piece.



# Never In The Hands

what's solid keeps shifting,  
a kind of slow slide  
beneath the day's footing—

a small body of water  
giving way to something larger  
held just past the edge  
of keeping it together—

and still the errands call,  
each list a small task  
to steady the shake  
that never shows in the hands



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# Grief Is A Room

Grief is a solitary room,  
a place you sit in alone.

Over time that room stretches;  
grief becomes a shared landscape,  
the mourned being landscape itself—  
not gone, but part of the air  
that settles around each connection.

It turns into a kind of weather  
you move through  
and breathe.

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# Nipping At Your Ghost

Nipper&quot;

A small dog waits  
beside the brass horn,  
ears lifted,  
body held in that soft readiness  
only devotion can teach.

Once a wanderer,  
he learned the shape of shelter  
in the warmth of a single voice.

Now the room is quiet,  
yet he leans  
toward the horn's bright mouth  
as though a familiar breath  
might rise again  
from its painted metal.

Brush in hand,  
he works the canvas again,  
colours deepening  
around the small dog's frame.

The horn waits, bright at the rim,  
and the dog leans toward it,  
steady as breath before a word.

Nothing moves in the room  
except the faint shift of his ears,  
as though some quiet spark  
might rise from the metal  
and meet him halfway.

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# On Being Pulled Back To The Page

"On Being Pulled Back to the Page"

I'm not sure why it happens this way—  
the tug, the nudge, the quiet little  
well, go on then  
that shows up when I'm trying  
to do anything else.

Maybe you know that feeling too:  
the poem clearing its throat  
in the next room,  
waiting for me to stop pretending  
I don't hear it.

And honestly, I've tried ignoring it.  
I've tried saying  
not now,  
or

I'm tired,  
or  
let someone else write you today.

But that never works.

It only sits heavier.

So here I am again,  
pen in hand,  
wondering if this is discipline  
or surrender  
or just the strange duty  
of being the one the words  
keep choosing.

I tell myself I could refuse—  
that nothing terrible would happen—  
but even as I say it,  
I know it isn't true.

Something in me would tilt,  
go slightly off its hinge.

So I write.

Not because I'm wise,  
or ready,  
or even particularly inspired,

but because the moment arrived  
and looked at me  
as if I were the only door  
it knew how to knock on.  
And who am I  
to leave it standing outside.

.

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# Your Face Remains

'your face remains'

The dial turns backward,  
hours unspool into thinning threads—  
memory dissolves,  
yet the face still remains.

.

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# A Slow Turning

The stairs lengthen each season,  
though the house remains the same.  
Names slip from my tongue—  
like coins through a frayed pocket,  
clinking faintly in corridors I no longer patrol.

I misplace mornings,  
folding them into afternoons  
that arrive already weary.

The calendar stares back blank,  
its squares scraped clean,  
eraser dust gathering at the margins.

Once, I carried lanterns of memory—  
now their glass fogs, their wicks splutter,  
spitting wax and smoke  
into rooms that echo with absence.

The rooms grow hollow,  
like ribs without breath,  
their emptiness pressing inward  
until silence settles in the chest.

Still, I walk.  
Each step rehearses collapse,  
each pause claws back a name.  
The body grows heavier,  
but the quiet between heartbeats  
remains mine to measure.

.

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# Thoughts On World Homeless Day

## I Was Homeless Once

I was homeless once—  
not metaphor, but pavement,  
the night's breath stiff with diesel,  
a borrowed coat that never quite closed.  
The city's lights were not for me,  
they glittered for windows I could not enter,  
for tables where bread was broken  
without my name.

I learned the grammar of benches,  
the syntax of doorways,  
the long pause of hunger  
that makes even silence ache.  
And still, the body endures—  
it finds a corner,  
it waits for dawn,  
it bargains with cold.

But there is another exile—  
homeless in a palace without you.  
Marble floors echo louder than alleys,  
chandeliers mock with their excess of light.  
Every room is furnished,  
yet emptier than a street at 3 a.m.  
The bed is wide,  
but no voice answers the turning.

This homelessness of heart  
is less spoken of,  
yet more corrosive:  
to be roofed, clothed, fed—  
and still unsheltered.

I was homeless once,  
and I survived.  
But I would not wish  
the palace-emptiness on anyone.



Better the cold stone  
than the warm room  
where no one waits.

.

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# The Wonder Of Self-Emptying

To empty is not to vanish.  
It is to pour the vessel  
until the air itself  
becomes a listener.

What remains is not absence  
but a widening —  
a room where another voice  
may enter and be heard.

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# In The Quietude Of Tides

Unread poems are unwritten poetry  
— ink still dreaming in the vein,  
pages breathing in the dark,  
their margins uncreased by any gaze,  
resting in that inward tide before the first swell of thought.

They live in the swell before the pen descends,  
in the pull between heartbeat and word,  
in the shadow-scent of paper waiting to be touched by thought,  
each line a slow undertow drawing the mind toward its shore.

Some will never cross the threshold,  
content to drift in the mind's antechamber,  
perfect in their unspilled form —  
a library of ghosts, bound in the quiet tide we carry.



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# Over-Shoulder Weather

## Over-Shoulder Weather

I have walked the length of my sentence  
long after the gates unlatched,  
counting the gravel underfoot  
as if each stone might still accuse.

The years have grown moss over my name,  
but transgression carved into memory's vestibule  
means there is always one chair turned away,  
its back carved with the shape of my absence.

I have mended the fence,  
stitched the torn sleeve,  
poured water into the roots I once scorched—  
but the wind still carries  
a syllable I cannot unhear.

So I move,  
but not without the weight of glancing—  
a pilgrim with a mirror in his pack,  
catching the ghost of my own retreat.

And forward is a road  
that keeps folding back on itself,  
a loop of weathered timber and rain-dark stone,  
where even the horizon  
wears my shadow like a borrowed coat,  
and the door I step through  
is always the same vestibule.

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# Poem Is A Verb

&quot;Poem Is a Verb&quot;

Strike flint to flame,  
let the lines take flight,  
They bite at the dark,  
they shoulder the light;

No throne for the poem,  
no chair for its nerve—  
It walks till it bleeds,  
for a poem's got verve.

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# Cleaver Of Devil's Kitchen

They name me Cleaver, though I am no hand,  
but the patient edge of centuries,  
a blade honed by the Southern swell,  
by wind that tastes of iron and kelp.

I split the dolerite as kin are split —  
not in malice, but in the slow necessity  
of tide and time,  
each fracture a journal of what was kept,  
and what was carried away.

Below, the broth seethes —  
foam thick as ghost-milk,  
steam rising in the blowhole's gasp,  
as if the earth itself were cooking  
its old, unspoken griefs.

I have swallowed anchors,  
and the names tied to them;  
I have heard the rope-burnt prayers  
of those who dangled over my mouth  
to glimpse the churn,  
and felt their shadows  
slip into my keeping.

Yet I am also a joiner —  
my spray salts the air  
that drifts inland to the gum-roots,  
where descendants breathe it in,  
unaware they are tasting  
the same brine  
that once sealed their forebears' lips.

Stand at my rim, and I will

show you the ledger's two columns:  
one for the living,  
one for the gone —  
and between them,  
the thin, wet line  
where I keep the knife.

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# Pass On While Flowing

Answer the call, fulfil the time.  
Grow in stature, live with benevolence.  
Seek wisdom at the source.  
Hold steadfast, mindful of the ancestors.

Advance with purpose, treasure the rare.  
Keep the record true, in purity of heart.  
Nourish the people, let abundance flow.  
Balance in harmony, like rain to the fields.

Read the signs, stand firm.  
Shine with purity, rise like jade peaks.  
Accomplish with grace, rooted as trees.  
Illuminate with honour, raise the light.

Advance with purpose, upright in conduct, inherit from afar.  
Inherit the trust, accomplish with grace, cherish virtue.  
Uphold and protect, with the grace of jade, in tranquil beauty.  
Live in virtue, bring peace, shine with harmony.  
Magnify benevolence, delight in goodness, dwell in peace and harmony.

Fred Rik Kesner



# Rose Cyle

cracked pot by the door—  
a rose blooms despite the mess  
still catching the light

her red is louder  
than missed calls and loaded carts  
she blooms anyway

petals tilt, unasked  
you pause with a half-held sigh  
she knows how to wait

no slow violins—  
just leaves falling on concrete  
no apologies

gone with no fanfare  
she leaves red on your fingers  
like something unsaid

.

© 13 hours ago, Frederick Kesner

Fred Rik Kesner

# A Clockwork Orangerie

"a clockwork orangerie"

gears click  
in humid glass

copper vines coil  
around brass struts

oranges glint  
like captive suns  
hinged to silver branches

steam drifts—  
a hiss-purr among pistons  
petals unfurl  
to the pulse of time

shadowed aisles  
radial rods pumping  
light into crystalline blooms

one dimpled fruit  
slips free  
into a glass basin  
and rings  
into silence.

.

Fred Rik Kesner

# 'The Cupboard Light'

"The Cupboard Light"

It was nearly midnight  
when he slipped out of bed,  
careful not to wake her.

The house exhaled its silence—  
walls warm with sleep,  
timber creaking  
from the day's last heat.

He padded to the kitchen  
in bare feet, opened the cupboard  
where li'l miss had hidden  
a note for him the day before:  
"I love you even when you forget milk.

He smiled at that.  
Switched on the stovetop light—  
not bright enough to disturb,  
just enough to see his notebook.

He scribbled under  
a half-written poem:

"Faith is not thunder. It's a fridge humming through the night."

A creak behind him.  
Li'l Miss in her tiny dressing gown,  
one sock half-off, thumb in her mouth.

"You writing again?" she asked.

He nodded.  
She nodded back, solemnly,  
like a poet-in-training,  
and padded away.

The cupboard light blinked once

and stilled. He returned to his pen.  
The house listened.

.

Fred Rik Kesner

# Sunday On The Hillside

Sunday on the Hillside

Rain threads the green expanse in silver, each drop a whispered footnote to memory.

You and I stand beneath that vast quiet— hands half-lifted, as if to pray.

The long stone walls hold the summer's promise, moss-soft and patient against our murmurs.

Your voice comes slow, a benediction to the ache of what is gone and what remains.

Around us, the hillside breathes in gentle hymns, ferns bowing in the sacred hush of rain—

and I learn again how love can rise like dawn, even when all night's shadows press close.

Fred Rik Kesner



PoemHunter.com

# When I Die

When I die—think only of dew at dawn,  
Whispering on grass that shivers bright,  
Ghostly lines where my breath has gone,  
Vanishing in the arms of light.

Let each drop hold my final sigh,  
Tender residue of night's embrace,  
Till warmth reclaims them in the sky,  
Leaving only memory's trace.

.

Fred Rik Kesner



PoemHunter.com

# To Be Draped Across The Sky

To Be Draped Across the Sky

Inside me, a night pulses—  
not with absence, but with embers.

Each thought a glimmering mote  
drifting slow through the dark  
architecture of marrow and memory.

I carry constellations not in skin,  
but behind the ribs, arranged in chords  
only silence can sing.

And yet—

This body is too narrow  
for what flickers behind my eyes.  
The starlight jostles, flares, seeks exit.

Let me burst— not into flame,  
but into fabric: filaments of self threading  
the sky where no sky had been.

Let my quiet blaze unfurl outward:  
an aurora learned from solitude,  
a drape of everything I dared to hide.

Let lovers lie beneath it  
and think it weather.  
Let astronomers name its folds.  
Let the sea reflect it,  
unafraid to shimmer back.

For what begins in the chest  
must not end there.  
Every inward brilliance longs  
to become covering —to become sky.

.

Fred Rik Kesner



# Feasting You

Thereupon a banquet spread  
delectable dishes arrayed—  
greens, meats, fruit, and wine:  
marine, fowl, farm, and vine.

Alongside me your visage bright,  
imbibing, ingesting, we sup;  
from selfsame platter dine—  
my heart yours, and yours mine.

The goblet glints in candle gleam,  
its rim still kissed with berry red;  
we toast not to the fleeting dream,  
but to the life we feast and wed.

A hush between the courses falls,  
save for the sigh of pouring rain,  
yet silence speaks where eye recalls  
your touch, my solace and refrain.

No richer fare could fill our need,  
nor daintier sweetness tempt the tongue,  
than nearness drawn in quiet deed—  
two souls where once there had been one.

And when the final crumbs are gone,  
and all the wine has slipped to air,  
still my heart, steadfast and fond,  
shall remember you—forever there.

Fred Rik Kesner

# Closed Windows

The screen yawns wide,  
empty as the Nullarbor plain—  
'no comments posted yet, ' it whispers,  
a sign more accusatory than absent.

You may look, it says, but don't touch.  
Permission belongs to ghosts,  
long gone or never given at all.

Kindness cracks its knuckles,  
flicks a cigarette to the curb—  
museum-bound, archived, unreachable.  
What thoughts could fill the void?  
Too dark. Too light. Too wrong.

And yet the cursor waits,  
blinking endlessly, smug  
as a lighthouse shining  
on waters you're not allowed to cross.

So, here we are, friend— reading windows  
that don't know the name of the wind,  
nor the whisper of tides rising too far to span.

Fred Rik Kesner

# Quiet Apologies

Apologia in Free Verse (After Too Much Meter)

I meant to speak plainly. To let the thought go unbuttoned,  
leaned against a kitchen chair, talking about traffic  
or the way light hits the linoleum.

But then—I rhymed.  
By accident or reflex or loneliness.

It was you that made me do it—  
not out of guilt, but because the sentence curled  
toward music, and I didn't stop it.

You rolled your eyes. I apologised.  
And still the phrases rang like pewter spoons.

There's something in me that keeps folding  
speech into couplets, as if silence  
might forgive it easier when dressed in echo.

So no—I wasn't trying to impress you.  
I was just afraid the truth, unmetred,  
might sound too sharp when said aloud.

Fred Rik Kesner

# My Poetic Side

Words collect like morning dew on leaves—  
offered, absorbed, refracted—  
a quiet exchange in the rhythms of being.

Voices scatter across a vast terrain  
gently meeting with fierce exclamations,  
each one feeding, each one fed.

Community thrives beneath unseen threads  
binding both fragile and the bold,  
roots deepening in shared soil.

Fred Rik Kesner



PoemHunter.com

# Still The Earth Breathes

Beneath the ash-grey skies of longing,  
the earth breathes—not for you,  
not for me, but for itself.

A pulse steady, undaunted by  
the footsteps we leave behind.

You will see the shadows move,  
and not ask why.  
You will taste the salt of oceans past,  
and still the waves will rise—  
relentless, unforgiving, and free.

They bend, they whisper,  
yes, they falter, but like the trees  
that bow to the storm, they rise again.

I have walked through cobbled streets of sorrow,  
where silence hums louder than hymns.  
I have felt the crack of thunder in my chest—  
but still I press forward, like the gull that rides the tempest.

Do you hear it? This rhythm beneath the quiet,  
this song that shapes the rippling dawn?  
It is there, between the bracken and stone,  
between the promise of sky and its return to earth.

You cannot still it, nor should you try.  
For even as I stumble, even as the gale bends me low,  
I rise—not alone, but as one with the tide, with the soil,  
with the breath that remains when all else fades.

Fred Rik Kesner

# The Poet's Barren Tale

They came for the feast of phrases,  
gathered 'round the wordless flame.  
Empty cups clinked, unsated,  
as the poet shrugged—his muse unspoken.

"There's no story here," he muttered,  
his mind a drought-struck desert.  
And so they sat, grasping shadows,  
a poem promised but never served.

Fred Rik Kesner



PoemHunter.com

# Thredbo, Winter 2025

Snow finds the peaks first.  
Dusts the rocks,  
a quiet landing overnight.  
Thredbo wakes white,  
a surprise for the valley.

Gum trees wear  
a light, cold cloak.  
The air bites clean.  
Chairlifts hang still,  
waiting.

A bloke sees his breath,  
puffs of white on the crisp morning.  
The mountain just changed its coat.  
Winter's here,  
a soft, bright start.

Fred Rik Kesner



PoemHunter.com

# Sleep On It

A soul refrains from distant quests,  
Throne, temple, summit—all forsaken.  
The answer dwells, soft-spoken, near,  
Its whispers carried on dawn's breath.

Kindness becomes as oil of lamps,  
A quiet deed ignites warm glow.  
Within the dark, love forms a hymn,  
Illuminating hearts, unseen.



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Do not journey far,  
The warmth you seek  
is folded close,  
Residing deep—within, it grows.

Fred Rik Kesner



# A Reckoning Of Voices

History does not pause for breath,  
it moves like morning,  
inevitable yet unnoticed.

We carve decisions into it,  
rough edges and second guesses,  
but no moment stands untouched by the past.

Some call for restoration—  
others dismantle, brick by brick,  
rebuilding from what remains.  
The voices collide,  
wary of each retort.

Fred Rik Kesner



PoemHunter.com

# Stillness Is Not Stability

They tell us to hold steady,  
keep the ground firm,  
but the ground itself shifts—  
silent adjustments beneath  
the weight of old decisions.

Change rolls in like the tide,  
deliberate, insistent;  
some brace against the swell, while  
others dive into its forward pull.

Neither stillness nor  
movement alone can hold us—  
we are in the in-between,  
where each choice sends  
ripples across the surface  
and every hesitation  
writes itself into tomorrow.

Fred Rik Kesner



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# Scaling Ivory Veils

Secrets remain shrouded, unspoken,  
yet I see them seep  
into the spaces between breaths.  
Truth, as it stands,  
refuses the grasp of words—  
it thrives in the moments  
we dare not recount.

The echo of vanity  
envelops everything I once chased,  
leaving me at odds  
with the reflection staring back.  
Comfort is fleeting, or perhaps,  
it never truly existed for me.

I hold to the notion they told me—  
that truth is what we shape it to be.  
Still, my hands shake beneath its weight,  
knowing life demands haste  
while the sun glares against unmown hay.  
Time always slips through fingers I'd thought steady.

Where truth dares to illuminate,  
I blink against its harsh light, recoiling,  
as concealment breeds its own sanctuary.  
The lies, given ivory form,  
pierce me again and again.

Each wound bares a history  
I could barely recount,  
yet I trace its edges  
when silence falls—remembering.

Fred Rik Kesner

# For The Unbroken

O Dionysus, breaker of chains,  
I sing not for the meek, the tamed, the gelded—  
But for the wolves who howl against the night,  
Who tear the velvet lies from rotting thrones!

The poets now are eunuchs, lisping hymns  
To hollow gods of equity and dust—  
But we, the few, drink deep the blood-red wine,  
And laugh as cowards beg for kinder chains!

Fred Rik Kesner



PoemHunter.com

# Thread-Diving

people are our real legacy;  
one day sure, entire poems  
shall have been forgotten,  
while remains a phrase or  
a feeling drawn from wells

deeper than memory can reach,  
or device can retrieve much like

thread-diving as we scamper for  
posts buried by traffic and flood posters...

follow, subscribe, or friend buttons  
can only do so much

so we hang on to what we have  
and hold dear, today saving  
each precious moment  
if bookmarked sentiments are promises  
all will be well -we'll boldly breathe again

Fred Rik Kesner

# Hymn Of The Exiles

They call us mad, they call us cursed,  
For we will not bow to their painted gods—  
Their temples reek of incense and decay,  
Their priests chant empty words to dying fires.

But we—we keep the old flame alive,  
The wild song, the untamed heart!  
Let them rot in their gilded cages,  
While we ride the storm, unchained!

Fred Rik Kesner



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# Harvest (Bintuan Rice Fields)

,

He hunches with sweat-drenched brow  
his sickle lay beside uncut stalks  
insects droning toward blood  
that trickles from the web of his hand  
He quickly wraps up the wound—

Throughout the day he works  
the scent of ripened rice fills the air  
against the threat of early rains  
to gather and thresh the golden grain  
Dreamless sleep, his reward—

The sun shone low in the sky  
fields now a barber's Number-2  
sound of children's play splinters air  
smoke of the evening meal meet clouds  
A cold drink soothes his hands

,

Fred Rik Kesner